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TRIBAL CULTURES OF PENINSULAR INDIA AS A DIMENSION OF LITTLE TRADITION IN THE STUDY OF INDIAN CIVILIZATION : A PRELIMINARY STATEMENT¹

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Introduction

THE genesis and functioning of indigenous civilizations has been conceived by Professors Redfield and Singer as involving continued interaction between a Great Tradition as abstracted and systematized by the specialist literati, mainly in urban centres, and the Little Traditions of little communities (Redfield and Singer 1954 ; Redfield 1955). A social group that perpetuates Little Traditions in relation to a civilization is labelled a 'peasant community' (Redfield 1955), as distinguished from the isolated self-sufficient 'folk-society' which Redfield

¹ A preliminary version of this paper was prepared by the author for a seminar on 'Comparison of Cultures : Little and Great Traditions of India—Interaction of Tribal, Peasant and Urban Dimensions', conducted jointly by Professors Redfield, Singer and the writer at the University of Chicago in the spring of 1956. The project was financed by the Ford Foundation. The author acknowledges his indebtedness to Professors Redfield and Singer for many kind suggestions during the preparation of this essay.

conceived as an ideal type in his earlier work (Redfield 1941). Unlike the ideal folk-society the peasant society is in continued interaction with 'country-wide networks' tied to one or more urban centres. The urban dimension of a primary civilization is mainly a product of elaboration and systematization of a core culture pattern shared by the peasant hinterland. Thus, in the course of a specific study of the peasant community at Kishan Garhi, Dr. Marriott finds it articulated with the Indian universe through various aspects of its social structure and also through its religious culture (Marriott 1955). Such persistent and numerous channels of communication between the peasant's village and the larger culture-community of the Great Tradition of India is a general characteristic of peasantry all through North India, and to a somewhat limited extent, also in other parts of India.

In this paper, we are concerned with conceptualizing the socio-cultural position of the little communities forming the so-called tribal belt of Peninsular India² in relation to the study of Indian civilization. These communities demand special consideration, for here we find communication with the larger universe of Indian civilization relatively more restricted and interrupted, although in not a single case is the community completely shut off from contact with what we call the great culture-community of India.

The tribal belt of central and southern India comprises about fifteen million people, of whom about 48 per cent did not declare themselves as Hindu during the 1931 census. We can conjecture with a reasonable degree of certainty that the bulk of the remaining 52 per cent, a large majority of whom declared themselves as Hindu, were not consciously Hindu one, two, three, four, five or some more hundred years back. If, for the sake of operational advantage, we take the 'consciousness of being a Hindu' as the diagnostic criterion of a persisting link with the Great Tradition of India, then we may be prompted, by taking a middle-range perspective of history, to exclude this group from the scope of our main interest, namely, the study of the development of Indian civilization.

² This includes the entire area south of the Indo-Gangetic plains.

However, aside from this picture of isolation, we have also another set of observations. Although these tribal communities are relatively more isolated in their active contact with the larger culture-community of the Great Tradition, compared to a traditional Hindu peasant community, it is still important to note that everywhere within the Indian mainland, these tribal communities have been in touch with the traditional network of weekly markets whereby they are involved in economic symbiosis with at least ten or more Hindu castes. This has been going on for at least one hundred years in most cases. Besides this participation in the organized market system, the tribal communities are in most areas in intimate contact with at least four Hindu or Hinduized artisan castes: the blacksmith, the basketry-maker, the potter, and the weaver. Interaction with these artisan groups extends beyond economic symbiosis to other aspects of social life, such as, ceremonial friendship, participation in common festivals, and so on.

Leaving the problem of genesis aside, and restricting ourselves to an observation of the contemporary scene, these little tribal communities would thus fall within the 'social field' of the Great Tradition of India. Whether they fall within the 'ideological field' of the Great Tradition or not demands closer examination.

If we look upon this tribal belt in a broad impressionistic manner, three points strike our attention :

- a. The overall characteristics of the socio-cultural system of these tribal communities are distinguishable from those of the traditional Hindu peasant communities.
- b. There are significant elements of continuity between the two kinds of socio-cultural systems.
- c. All over central and southern India we find the tribal communities in a process of transformation, which brings them closer to peasant Hindu communities. There is not a single tribe in this belt completely unaffected by Hinduism.

Keeping the above impressions in mind, we can perhaps conceptualize the position of the Little Traditions of these tribal communities in one of the following ways :

- a. These tribal cultures seem apparently to be outside the main historical current of the development of Indian civilization. The only way to study them in relation to that civilization will be in terms of numerous particular acculturation studies involving the contact of tribal cultures with already-formed centres of Indian civilization.
- b. Following Kroeber's paper on the *Ancient Oikumenê*, the tribal cultures may be conceived of as a backward branch of traditional Indian civilization :
 ['the primitives in the area, or adjoining it, derive their cultures mainly from the civilizations characteristic of the *Oikumenê* as a whole through reductive selection. They preserve old elements which their retardation make them unable or unwilling to accept. Basically, however, these retarded or primitive cultures in or adjacent to the *Oikumenê* are fully intelligible only in terms of "oecumenical civilizations". They usually add to what they share some lesser measure of their own proper peculiarities and originations and they have developed a distinctive style of their own. But in the main these backward cultures depend and derive from the greater ones whose nexus we have been considering.' (Kroeber 1952 : 392)]
- c. The tribal cultures give us an idea of the initial primitive level of cultural raw materials that contributed to the development of Indian civilization. The contemporary tribal cultures represent a relatively untransformed section of the original primitive culture, arrested in its development mainly due to ecological factors of isolation and also perhaps due to some unknown series of historical accidents.

The first one of this series of conceptualizations is the safest and most non-committal but analytically the least incisive. I am inclined to keep it in reserve only as the last alternative, if other more bold and committed approaches fail.

The second approach suggested by Kroeber is appealing and in a way very similar to our third approach, but with a

reversed starting point. Here we are looking from the top, namely, from civilization down to the primitive isolate. Kroeber's assumption, that '...in the main these backward cultures depend and derive from the greater ones...', appears true if we look at the contemporary, recent or middle-range historical scene, when civilization is dominantly established for a major area of the Indian mainland.

But taking a long-range perspective of history, we are led to the third approach, reminiscent of the old-fashioned evolutionary approach. Here we see the problem of genesis starting from the primitive isolate and looking upwards. Such an approach seems to the author to be the most promising and in conformity with available data. There is, however, no way of providing long-range historical documentation in support of this latter approach. We shall examine the data mainly on a synchronic level by examining socio-cultural systems at different levels of integration and thus try to reach the middle-range of historical depth wherever possible.

As an essential first step, we will attempt to isolate a series of functionally related characteristics that distinguish the tribal communities as a whole from the Hindu peasant communities. This will be the main concern of the present paper. Later on, we shall take up a comparative study of the transformation scene, with a view to isolating some of the persistent processes of change in the social-structural and ideological dimensions in the cultural system.

In Redfield's writings, again, I find a favourable pointer to my selection of the third way of conceptualization. He puts it remarkably well when he describes Indian peasant society as follows : 'It is as if the characteristic social structure of the primitive self-contained community had been dissected out and its components spread about a wide area. Rural India is primitive or tribal society rearranged to fit a civilization' (Redfield 1955). He characterizes the growth of indigenous civilization as a 'conversion of tribal people into peasantry'. Evidently, the conversion cannot be conceived as a quick process arrived at in one step with equal intensity throughout pre-civilized tribal India.

There were in all probability multiple focal points (spatially

speaking) of development of civilization—with urban or urban-like centres and peasant hinterland—from which acculturative influences spread out to the yet untransformed, but genetically related, outlying tribal groups. This process of transformation has not yet reached its logical limit in contemporary India. The primitive tribal belt of to-day may thus be conceived as the yet-untransformed residue of tribal cultures; and in the acculturation or transformation scene of tribal cultures of to-day we are likely to discover some of the basic processes involved in the building up of the indigenous civilization of India.

Among the earlier workers seriously interested in the relation of tribal cultures to the traditional Hindu cultural system, we may mention Risley, Hutton, Roy, O'Malley, Elwin and numerous census commissioners. On the one hand, they have indicated numerous elements of similarity between tribal religions and popular Hinduism, while on the other they have, with the possible exception of Hutton, implied or pointed out that tribal cultures are essentially unrelated to the core pattern of classical Hinduism which was imported by the Aryan conquerors. This latter hypothesis, however, is being modified in the light of excavation connected with the Indus valley civilization. Sir John Marshall points out clearly many roots of Puranic or classical Hinduism in the Indus valley civilization (Marshall 1931). Although there is a general consensus of opinion that the builders of that civilization were pre-Aryan, as regards their actual identity, we are yet on no sure grounds. It is possible, as some speculate, that they were related to the ancient progenitors of the contemporary Dravidian culture of South India. In any case, the system of religious belief of the above-mentioned primitive tribes needs to be more carefully compared with the Hinduism of the peasants, as also with classical Hinduism.

A general limitation of the earlier approaches is that they have uniformly used religious belief as an isolated topic for comparison, instead of using a more holistic, functionally integrated framework. Mr. Marriott's master's thesis entitled 'Growth of Caste in India' (1949) is a refreshing departure from this procedure. Here he examines eleven tribes of the central

Indian belt with the hope of isolating some of the major persistent processes involved in the growth of the caste system. He uses the 'acculturative' or synthetic approach to the study with exclusive reference to social structure. His approach is of special interest to us ; for here he examines from the available literature, rudiments of the process of development of the caste system, mainly as a result of interactions within the tribal zone. Marriott, however, is not entirely satisfied with his social structural framework : '...the significance of a general background of Hindu cultural influences, especially the influence of religious ideas, may have been unduly neglected in this thesis...' (Marriott 1949). Following his lead we may approach the material in a broader perspective.

In our discussion of tribal India, we roughly limit ourselves to fifteen million people living in and around Peninsular India, covering the hills, plateaus and the neighbouring plains of Bombay, Madhya Pradesh, Hyderabad, Orissa, southern Bihar and West Bengal. In order of their numerical importance, the principal tribes are the Gond, Santal, Bhil, Oraon, Kondh, Munda, Bhuiya, Ho, Savara, Kol, Korku, Pahariya and Baiga. They represent communities at various levels of economic efficiency : the Birhor and the Hill Kharia live by dependence on hunting and collecting ; the Baiga or Hill Bhuiya similarly depend on shifting cultivation, while the Munda, Ho, Santal and Bhumij practise settled agriculture. Some of these tribes living in relatively interior areas have been very lightly touched by Hinduism, viz., the Baiga or the Ho of Kolhan, while at the other extreme there are tribes, such as, the Bhumij of Manbhum or the Raj Gond of Madhya Pradesh, who declared themselves as Hindu in the census of 1931.

The languages of these tribal groups of Peninsular India belong primarily to two stocks, the Munda or Kherwari and the Dravidian. The Munda-speaking tribes, such as, Ho, Kharia, Munda and Santal are restricted in their distribution to Chotanagpur plateau and surrounding areas, while the major habitat of the Dravidian-speaking tribes, such as Gond, Khond, Bison-horn Reddi, Kadar, etc., is in central and southern India. A few of these tribes, again, such as the Bhil of central India and

the Bhumij of Manbhum, have adopted Indo-Aryan languages in place of their original tongue for quite some time.

Physical anthropologists of the past have specified the physical features of the group as follows: short to medium stature, wavy black hair, dark colour of the skin, dolichocephalic head and platyrrhine nose. Dr. Guha labels them as Proto-Australoid as distinguished from the Mediterranean type of South India, represented mainly by the Dravidian speakers. With the exception of narrower nose, the latter's physical features are almost identical with those of the so-called Proto-Australoids (Guha 1937).

Hutton, since the census operation of 1931, has made a somewhat arbitrary and neat speculation about racial migrations and cultural developments in India. According to him, there have been successive waves of migration of peoples into India, bringing in different cultures. Contemporary Indian population and civilization, according to him, is an amalgam of all these. The successive series according to him are: Negrito, Proto-Australoid, Early Mediterranean, and finally, the Later Mediterranean, Alpine and Nordic; all of these having come through the north-western gateway. From the north-east came the various Mongoloid groups, about whose relative date of entry, Hutton is not certain (Hutton 1951: 1-7).

Arthur Keith questions Guha and Hutton's hypothesis of the early population of India being entirely received through immigration: 'Yet, strange to say, all or nearly all, who have sought to explain the differentiation of the population of India into racial types have sought the solution of this problem outside the Peninsula. They have never attempted to ascertain how far India has bred her own races..No doubt India has been invaded over and over again; certain racial types are of extraneous origin. But one would venture the opinion that 85 per cent of the blood of India is native to the soil. At least it is urgently necessary that our eyes should be focussed more directly on the possibility of India being an evolutionary field—both now and in former times' (Sarkar 1954: 19). Following this lead of Keith, S. S. Sarkar prefers to use the term 'Veddid' for the Dravidian.

speaking, mainly forest-dwelling, tribes of South India who are, according to him, the true autochthones of India. Within this group, he tentatively includes the Urali, Kanikkar, Muthuvan of Travancore ; the Paniyan of Wynad, Malabar ; the Sholga, the Kurumba and the Irula of the Nilgiris ; the Chenchu of Hyderabad and the Kadar and the Malsar of Cochin. Sarkar distinguishes the autochthonous Dravidian-speaking Veddid racial stock from the Munda-speaking tribes, who are regarded by him as later immigrants to the Indian soil (Sarkar 1954).

In the absence of datable fossil human remains and adequate cultural data, we are not yet in a position to take too definite a stand on this controversial issue, particularly with reference to the chronological aspect of it.

We can perhaps say with some confidence that the Aryan speakers are later arrivals on the Indian scene compared to the *main* carriers of Munda and Dravidian languages.³ In all probability the basic orientation of India's primary civilization was laid before the Aryan intrusion, through prolonged interaction of the Little Traditions of the Munda and Dravidian little communities. If the measurements on the Mahenjodaro skeletal remains published by Marshall, Mackay, Sewell and Guha are taken at their face value, we find evidences both of 'Proto-Australoid' and 'Mediterranean' types in the urbanized population (Wheeler 1954 : 51). If the Mediterranean type be identified with the ancestors of modern 'non-Proto-Australoid' 'non-Veddid' Dravidian speakers in South India, then we may assume that the interaction started as early as about the third millenium B. C.

Leaving these historical speculations aside, let us turn to a synchronic structural comparison between the tribal cultures and the cultures of the Hindu peasantry. The data on tribal cultures is provided by various published materials and my own field work among the Munda, Bhumij, Ho, and Oraon. Broadly speaking, we shall restrict ourselves to the following communities :

³ Professor Haimendorf, however, questions the priority of the Dravidians on the Indian scene relative to the Aryans on grounds which are not yet very convincing (Haimendorf 1949 : 152-157).

Mainly hunters and gatherers : The Hill Kharia, Pahira and Birhor of Chotanagpur.

Mainly shifting cultivators : The Hill Bhuiya, Juang and Khond of Orissa ; the Korwa, Baiga, Hill Maria Gond of Madhya Pradesh ; the Chenchu and Bison-horn Reddi of Hyderabad.

Settled agriculturists : The Munda, Ho, Santal, Dudh Kharia, Bathuri, Bhumij, Oraon and Savara of southern Bihar and Orissa ; the Raj Gond of Madhya Pradesh and Hyderabad.

The generalized characteristics of the Hindu peasant communities will be derived partly from my general impression about them of Hindu village communities in West Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, as I have seen them, and also from the recent publications on Indian peasant communities in the *Economic Weekly* (1951-54), and from the various articles published in *Village India*, edited by Marriott (1955).

*The Two Kinds of Cultural Systems*⁴

In the following pages, we shall describe in broad terms some implicitly functionally-related aspects of the culture-pattern of the two kinds of societies, referring only occasionally to a single community or tribe. The totality of the culture-pattern and its settings has been broken down into the following aspects, namely, habitat, economy, social structure, and ideological system. Our characterization will perhaps be more applicable to pre-industrial India, i.e., India of the middle of the nineteenth century, than to contemporary India ; although in all essentials it fits in with the contemporary picture as well.

⁴ I wish to acknowledge here my indebtedness to Professor Tarak Chandra Das of the University of Calcutta, from whom I imbibed many of my ideas regarding the characteristics of the tribal communities as distinguished from the Hindu peasantry. Professor Das, however, is not responsible for the details of the present characterization or for the general developmental implications in this paper.

Habitat

Tribals

A major portion of the tribal habitat of central India is hilly and forested. Tribal villages are generally found in areas away from the alluvial plains close to rivers.

Hindu Peasantry

A large proportion of Hindu peasant villages are in deforested plateaus or plains. Many of these villages are crowded in the river plains.

Economy

Tribals

1. The subsistence economy is based mainly on either hunting, collecting, and fishing (e.g., the Birhor, Hill Kharia), or a combination of hunting and collecting with shifting cultivation (e.g., the Juang, Hill Bhuiya, etc.). Even the so-called plough-using agricultural tribes have the tradition of subsistence mainly by means of shifting cultivation in the past.

2. Specialization of crafts includes iron-smelting and smithery, basket and bark-rope making and weaving. It is difficult to say whether they had wheel-made pottery and brass work traditionally. Some of the tribes, like the Juang or the Chenchu, have the tradition of never using pottery in ancient times. In all probability, initially, most of the crafts were not confined to whole-time specialists. There is evidence that the Lohra blacksmiths and iron smelters once formed a part of the Munda tribe, and that the Mahali basket-makers once formed a part of the Santal tribe.

3. The local village community is nearly self-sufficient. Circulation of goods is based entirely on barter. There are however rudiments of inter-ethnic co-operation in the circulation of goods within a limited area. The wandering Birhor supplied bark-ropes and honey to the Ho and Munda and other neighbouring peoples. The Munda procured iron implements from the Asur and various types of basketry from the Mahali. Mandelbaum describes the socio-economic symbiosis

among the aboriginal Kota, Badaga, Kurumba and Toda in the Nilgiri area (Mandelbaum 1941). There are no specialist traders among them.

4. Capital: There is very little incentive towards the accumulation of capital on an individual level, although a sense of individual ownership is quite developed with reference to hunted animals or collected vegetables. The hunting or collecting territory roughly belongs to the village community; and it is customary for any group not to poach upon the territory of another. Among the tribes that practise shifting cultivation, and have ample scope for expansion, there is very little competition for the covering of more land individually. Among the settled agriculturists, like the Ho, Munda and Bhumij, however, we find a distinct incentive towards accumulation of capital in the form of land and store of paddy.

Hindu Peasantry

1. The main subsistence economy is intensive agriculture with the help of the plough drawn by bullocks or buffaloes.

2. Intricate full-time specialization in crafts, with the development of a sophisticated tradition of artistic excellence supported mainly by a feudal aristocracy. Among the full-time specialists associated with Hindu villages, not to be found in the traditional tribal communities, may be mentioned: gold and silver-smiths, weavers of fine silk cloth, bell-metal workers, etc.

3. Beyond a limited degree of local self-sufficiency, the village community is tied to a country-wide network of markets, ultimately related to commercial towns.

4. Incentive towards the accumulation of capital is quite strong. Capital is mainly defined in terms of land, store of grains, cash, valuable metals and jewelry.

Social Structure

Tribals

1. The largest significant reference group is the tribe or a segment of it, the 'sub-tribe,' i.e., single endogamous ethnic

group occupying a more or less contiguous territory. In many cases, we find tribes like the Santal, Munda or Ho describing themselves as *H o r* (men), while others are *D i k u* (aliens). In actuality, we find that, among the same tribes, the latter term is not actually used with reference to a few ethnic groups with whom they have set up traditional symbiotic relationships of long standing. Thus, the Ho do not use this term for the Lohar (blacksmith), Mahali (basket-maker), or Gaur (cattle tender) within their village community.

2. The tribe is segmented into exogamous (patrilineal in most cases), (often) totemic clans, frequently with territorial cohesion and strong corporate identity.

3. Clans are segmented into lineages which serve as important corporate groups.

4. The kinship system may be labelled as 'tempered classificatory' (maximal lineage setting the limit to the application of kinship terms, although terminologies often extend to members of the village as a whole). In terminology, we find that the emphasis lies on the unilineal principle, generation and age.

5. There is an emphasis on patrilineal descent and patrilocal authority in most groups.

6. The village is the most important territorial unit. Among many of these tribes, nearly twelve villages form a socio-political federation with its own council. Among a few (the Munda and the Bhumij) we also find a tendency to form even larger federations.

7. There is very little specialization of social roles. With the exception of role differentiation in terms of kinship and sex and some specialization in crafts already referred to, the only other role specializations are : headman, village-priest, and medicine-man.

8. There is very little rigid stratification in society. (This is specially so among the tribes who practise hunting and collecting and shifting cultivation.) There is, however, a tendency towards stratification along the following lines, especially among the settled agricultural groups : relative political supremacy of the numerically dominant clan, relative to other

settlers ; superiority in land-holding of the earlier settlers, relative to later settlers ; symbolic ritual superiority of one group over another, due to ritual degradation of the other in traditional terms, and tendency of the priest-headmen to form an endogamous class.

9. Secular and religious leadership are combined in one person. The headman is a chief amongst equals, with no special privilege in property. He is assisted in his work by a democratic council of village elders formed by all the adult members of the village. The council's decision is final.

Hindu Peasantry

1. The largest significant reference group expands beyond the village or the caste group to the linguistic province or even farther, covering the total Hindu social universe and comprising numerous distinct ethnic groups. The bases of such extended ties beyond the little village community are varied and numerous, including connection with central administrative townships, network of markets, marriage and caste relations and network of religious centres and religious fairs.

2. The caste is usually segmented into exogamous clans which are often non-totemic. The clans are usually non-territorial and do not have any corporate identity.

3. Clans or *gotras* are segmented into lineages which serve as important corporate groups.

4. The kinship system may be labelled as 'tempered classificatory' (maximal lineage setting the limit to the application of kinship terms, although terminologies often extend to members of the village as a whole). In terminology, we find the emphasis on the unilineal principle, generation and age.

5. There is an emphasis on patrilineal descent and patrilocal authority among most groups.

6. The village is the most important territorial unit. But territorial relations extend beyond the village on various different bases, such as, democratic federation of villages under a superior council, connection with a hierarchy of administrative towns, network of markets, relationships

through marriage, ties of caste and participation in religious fairs and pilgrimages. Territories organized under such varied principles make up a complex inter-penetrating country-wide network.

7. We have already spoken about intensive specialization of crafts and the existence of full-time traders. There is similar specialization in political roles within a feudal setting which touches the village. Religious aspects of culture demand the service of various specialists, e. g., priests (for usual life-cycle rites and festivals), astrologers, genealogists, s a d h u s of repute and also medicine-men or o j h a s. Among such specialists, we may also mention teachers belonging to traditional schools.

8. Intricate stratification into hierarchically arranged endogamous castes whose ranking refers itself to the classical ideal pattern of four orders or v a r n a s ; while specific rank as a caste within a region seems to be determined by a combination of the following objective factors : relative economic position, especially with reference to land-holding, relative political dominance, relative numerical strength, symbolic validation in ritual habits in relation to the Great Tradition.

Besides caste ranking, there are also other principles of stratification current in society, e.g., ranking in terms of wealth or economic class, political power and literary education. These various principles of stratification largely overlap and partially inter-penetrate, making the overall ranking system extremely complicated.

9. (a) Although secular leadership is provided with direct and indirect ritual sanctions, the two functionaries, secular and religious, are clearly differentiated.

(b) Here we often find a combination of democratic leadership by elders and direct control by the feudal aristocracy from the top, with its centre at the capital township, having its court of justice as final reference of law and order, supported by police force and military reserve,

Ideological System

Tribals*A. Supernaturalism*

1. The pantheon consists of one Sun God and a lower hierarchy of gods. Next to the Sun God, the important deities are village tutelary gods and ancestral spirits. Almost of equal importance are some nature spirits, for example, the spirits of the hills and the presiding deities of the waters.

2. Gods are conceived of as powerful beings. They are classified into two classes, namely, those who are habitually friendly or benevolent, and those who are malevolent. But even the benevolent gods are not considered to be repositories of ethical qualities. Gods do not necessarily demand noble or generous action from their devotee ; they demand only personal loyalty.

3. Supernatural rites are explicitly directed towards happiness and security in this world ; abundance in crops and children, and avoidance of sickness and death being the supreme considerations.

4. There is no concept of 'heaven' or 'hell' or of rewards or punishments for moral or immoral acts. The soul is called back to join the ancestral spirits in the sacred domestic tabernacle. The soul turns into a malevolent spirit only in the case of an unnatural death.

5. There is a belief in re-incarnation and transmigration of souls into various forms of life, namely, trees, birds, animals, etc. But there is no connection between ethical action and the form of re-incarnation. The concept of re-incarnation is not arranged in an ascending hierarchy of superior forms of life (as traditionally determined), nor is re-incarnation considered inevitable.

6. No idol or temple in well-defined form is found ; although we do find rudiments of idolatry in the worship of unworked stones and also rudiments of the concept of the temple in the institution of the sacred grove. There is, however, no erection of a house for the deity among most of these tribes.

7. Animal sacrifice is an essential part of rituals.
8. Magic and witchcraft predominate.

B. Some Aspects of Value-systems and World-views

Man-Nature

1. The natural universe is charged with impersonal and personalized supernatural power.

2. The natural universe is significantly continuous with the human world of sentiments and social interaction. Thus man, nature and the supernatural are connected in terms of intimate relationship.

(This is true with reference to both tribal and non-tribal Hindu peasant communities.)

Man-Man

1. The human universe is practically limited to the tribe or, at the most, extends to a few local ethnic groups having long-standing traditional symbiotic relationship.

2. Equality and reciprocity are emphasized in human relationship.

3. Morality of social action is always judged in terms of corporate kinship or territorial reference groups.

4. Elders are respected.

5. There is significant male dominance in social life.

6. Desire for children is quite dominant.

7. The good life is conceived of as a life with ample scope of indulgence in pleasure, while maintaining social obligations to corporate group or groups. We find little emphasis on cautious accumulation of wealth at the cost of pleasure.

Hindu Peasantry

A. Supernaturalism

1. This is a combination of monotheism, pantheism and polytheism. Sun worship is a very important element of Brahminical tradition ; although the Sun God is not regarded as the Supreme Being or *B h a g a w a n*.

The pantheon is much more elaborate in peasant Hinduism, which has some limited access to written sacred literature. It contains some of the gods of the Great Indian Tradition, as

well as local spirits and deities. Reverence for mountains, ancestral spirits and village tutelary spirits is an important element in peasant Hinduism. The peasant is accustomed to classifying his gods with special reference to caste, village, lineage, family and individual, each unit having its special presiding deity.

2. In peasant Hinduism, magical or power connotation of the deities predominates. But, in addition, there is an emergent overtone of the gods occasionally standing for high ethical quality. *D h a r m a*, rewarding moral behaviour and punishing sinful or immoral behaviour. By using the term 'religious', *D h a r m i k a*, the villager may mean a rather mechanistic concept of one who observes the traditional rituals correctly. But there is also a parallel concept of one leading a generous and selfless life, not speaking untruth, being above greed, and so on. It is believed that such moral behaviour is favoured by the gods, and is also good for the soul.

3. Along with the predominance of concern about happiness in terms of material prosperity and health in this world, there is also a *pragmatic* concern about a similar kind of happiness in the other world. Austerity and renunciation are directed towards this goal.

4. The concepts of 'heaven' and 'hell' are very important.

5. Belief in re-incarnation is highly systematized through the concept of an ascending series of forms, and is loaded with ethical connotation; the form of re-incarnation being determined by the ethical value of an action.

6. Both temples and idolatry are very important.

7. Animal sacrifice forms an essential part of the rituals of many sects: while abstention from killing of all kinds is associated integrally with other sects.

8. There is a predominance of magic and witchcraft.

B. Some Aspects of Value-systems and World-view

Man Nature : Same as in tribal communities (see p. 109).

Man-Man

1. The human universe, after accentuation of narrow-range social affiliations like lineage, local group or village,

caste, and so on, expand- outwards to encompass the state or even farther.

2. Superordination and subordination is the keynote of social interaction.

3. The morality of social action is usually judged in terms of corporate kinship, territorial or other reference groups.

4. Respect for elders is even more intense than in the case of the tribals : this being especially so among upper castes.

5. Male dominance is even more marked among most groups.

6. Desire for children is quite dominant.

7. Tribal hedonism is mixed with a cautious concern for economic prosperity through strenuous and steady labour : the latter attitude being supported by the puritanical streak of abstention that we find in supernaturalism.

Aspirational Level

Impressionistically, we can state that relative to the peasantry, the level of aspiration among tribal communities is comparatively lower. Even within the bounds of indigenous civilization, the peasant's world-view is affected by ideals coming from the elites of the city, creating in him the desire for more land and wealth, more political power, superior social status for his family, lineage, or caste group, artistic and intellectual excellence which is recognized by an expanded audience, and so on. These surplus desires hit the peasant's mind, which is otherwise marked by a relatively passive acceptance of what he is.

The Common Denominators

A cursory review of the above comparison reveals significant elements of continuity between non-Hindu tribal and Hindu peasant socio-cultural systems. Among these may be mentioned the following :

Economy : Emphasis on local self-sufficiency, barter as an important element in trade, corporate kinship reference in economy, symbiotic relationship with ethnic groups.

Social Structure : 'Caste' and 'Tribe' having almost identical structural features as social units with a belief in

common descent and endogamy ; exogamous clans segmented into functional lineages, a tempered classificatory kinship terminology whose maximum limit of applicability is set by the maximal lineage ; relative age and generation being very important in the kinship system ; the village being the most important territorial unit ; patrilineal and patripotestal emphasis (in most cases), and finally democracy in leadership.

Ideological System : A. Supernaturalism : Polytheism, belief in a supreme being, pantheon including village tutelary gods, ancestral spirits, spirits of the hills and waters, belief in re-incarnation, corporate social reference in religion, pragmatic considerations of fertility in crops and women and avoidance of sickness running supreme in rituals and animal sacrifice. B. Value-system and world-view : Natural universe being charged with personal and impersonal supernatural powers, natural universe being contiguous with the human world of sentiments and social interactions ; respect for elders, desire for children, male dominance in social life, and an underlying hedonism.

One question, however, arises in these pursuits of common denominators : To what extent is their commonness 'apparent' or 'real' ? How can we be definite, for example, whether animal sacrifice, transmigration and re-incarnation of the soul and the like have the same meaning in the two cultural systems under comparison ? It is the contention of the writer that while a final definite answer cannot be given to such queries in the present state of our knowledge, existing literature and the writer's ethnographic field experience point to the plausibility of such a comparison.

Many of the earlier students of tribal cultures in India were aware of this factor of continuity, especially in the field of religion. Risley described Hinduism as 'animism more or less transformed by philosophy', or as 'magic tempered by metaphysic' and finally opined that, 'No sharp line of demarcation can be drawn between Hinduism and animism (i.e., tribal religions). The one shades away insensibly into the other' (Risley 1915 : 218, 233, 245). E. A. Gait, Census Commissioner of 1911, found it extremely difficult 'to say at what stage

a man should be regarded as having become Hindu' (Gait 1913 : 129-30). Mr. J. J. Marten, Census Commissioner of 1921, observes : 'There is little to distinguish in the religious attitude of an aboriginal Gond or Bhil from that of a number of lower Hindu castes. Both are essentially animistic.' Verrier Elwin suggests that all the aboriginal tribes except those of Assam 'should be classed in the census returns as Hindu by religion as their religion belongs to the Hindu family.'

Reviewing previous comments on the cultural position of the aboriginal tribes of central India, Ghurye remarks : 'It is clear from this discussion that the proper description of these peoples must refer itself to their place in or near Hindu society ...while sections of these tribes are properly integrated in the Hindu society, very large sections, in fact the bulk of them, are rather loosely assimilated. Only very small recesses of hills and depths of forests have not been more than touched by Hinduism. Under the circumstances, the only proper description of the people is that they are imperfectly integrated classes of Hindu society. Though for the sake of convenience they may be designated as tribal classes of Hindu society, suggesting thereby that they retained much more of the tribal creeds and organizations than many of the castes of Hindu society, yet in reality they are backward Hindus' (Ghurye 1943).

The Emergent Aspects

Now, let us summarily isolate and list the 'discontinuous' or 'emergent' aspects in peasant cultures.

Economy : Intensive agriculture as the basis of economy, incentive towards accumulation of capital, currency and intricate network of markets tied finally to commercial towns, multiple specialization of roles in production, emergence of the specialist trader group, differential possession of wealth leading to economic stratification.

Social Structure : Highly formalized stratification into castes and development of other principles of stratification, more complex specialization of social roles, widening of social ties involving multi-ethnic groups, interpenetrative network of

territorial structure, tied to townships and cities, priestly class and literati and the presence of formal educational institutions.

Ideological System : A. Supernaturalism : Idol-worship and temples, organized priestly class, moral connotation of supernaturalism with concepts of sin, heaven and hell, and reference to a written sacred tradition. B. Value-system and world-view : Emphasis on superordination and subordination in social life, intensive supernaturally oriented drive for moral life supported by puritanical concepts of asceticism and renunciation, the human universe extending beyond caste, lineage or local group.

Among the above items of emergence, a surplus economy based on settled agriculture, the development of social stratification and the growth of ethical religion appear to have been most comprehensive in scope.

The Transitional Aspects

We should also note some of the transitional elements in tribal cultures in the direction of our general characterization of the peasant level of culture. Thus, in economy, we find a tendency towards full-time specialization in the following crafts: basket-making, smithery, rope-making and weaving. We also find inter-ethnic exchange of goods and services in the aboriginal setting. We mentioned the case of the Birhor and the Ho, and also of the Kota, Kurumba, Badaga and Toda. In social structure, we spoke of some tendencies towards stratification, defined by the factors of relative numerical strength, priority of arrival, ritual purity, and so on. We also found tendencies towards feudalization of leadership among the Bhumij and the Munda.

In supernaturalism, however, we cannot identify elements of transition from 'ethically neutral supernaturalism' to 'ethical supernaturalism.'

Conclusion

It may be argued that our characterization of the tribal cultures appears to be much too general to be useful ; it might fit in well with the picture of primitive cultures anywhere in the world. This is indeed so when we refer to such items as

lack of stratification, limiting the social and moral universe to one's own ethnic group, intimate integration of man, nature and supernatural in the world-view, and lack of personal ethics in supernaturalism. We emphasized these aspects deliberately in order to point out convincingly that tribal cultures of Peninsular India do share certain characteristics common to primitive cultures all over the world. Beyond these, however, we also find certain specific items among the tribal cultures of India which are not necessarily universally shared by primitive tribes in other parts of the world. Among these, we may mention the existence of a hierarchic pantheon with the Sun God at the top ; belief in re-incarnation and transmigration of the soul.

Professor David G. Mandelbaum commented on a preliminary version of this paper, that most of the distinctions put forward in characterizing the peasant Hindu vis-a-vis the tribals would hold ground if we restrict the comparison only to the highest among the Hindu castes. On the other hand, he argued, very little significant differences in cultural patterns and in value-systems would be found between the lower Hindu castes and the tribals. There is indeed some validity in Mandelbaum's criticism ; for many of the lower castes in India seem to share with the tribals the following characteristics : emphasis on equality in social behaviour within one's own ethnic group, considerable freedom of cultural participation for the women, value-system being little burdened by puritanical asceticism. Further, the supernaturalism of these lowest castes has some similarity with that of the tribes, in that, their pantheon primarily consists of local gods, while their supernaturalism is rarely accompanied by ethical considerations. Through economic backwardness, social segregation and a general lack of direct access to literate Hindu traditions, the lowest Hindu castes are in comparative isolation from the central current of the development of sophisticated Hinduism ; this being more or less similar to the situation among the tribes. Yet, even with these important similarities, the main feature that distinguishes the cultures of the lowest castes from those

of the tribals is that while the former accept, maybe somewhat grudgingly, their inferior status in a larger social system, the tribals live in a comparatively more easily defined, self-sufficient social and ideological world. The latter consider their culture as being unique to themselves, and do not feel that they are in any way subservient to a larger system. Also, while it is true that the lowest castes are primarily illiterate, they are not completely free from the influence of the ethically loaded, partly puritanical theology and world-view of literate upper caste Hindus, whose messages they receive through verbal communication and through cultural performances, such as, the dance, drama, etc. These considerations prompt us to maintain our initial distinction between the cultures of the tribals and those of the Hindu peasantry, taken as a whole. We, however, should be prepared to attempt in future at characterizing the lower Hindu castes as a special dimension of Hindu peasantry, with a view to examining whether the latter come nearer to the tribals or to the upper caste Hindus.

Our lumping together of the Dravidian and the Mundari-speaking tribes in one whole and the exclusion of the Assam group of tribes, may be justified only on the plea of a preliminary effort at systematization. The next step will obviously involve examining in detail the cultures of the so-called tribal groups vis-a-vis those of the Hindu castes, higher and lower, taken separately, in the different major regions of India. This will have to be done both in terms of synchronic structural comparison and in terms of the key processes of interaction between the tribals and the Hindu peasantry. This latter aspect needs to be studied in as much historical depth as possible. Furthermore, it is important to make overall comparisons of the cultural patterns of the Munda, Dravidian and Assam group of tribes.

Keeping the above-mentioned limitations of our present endeavour, we may say that we have been able to demonstrate the *possibility* of orthogenetic development of civilization in India from a primitive cultural level, roughly comparable to cultures of the less acculturated tribes of Peninsular India. We have pointed out vital elements of continuity between tribal cultures and Hindu peasant traditions. We have also been

able to isolate some potential elements of transition in the direction of peasant cultures in tendencies towards feudalization, stratification, specialization of roles, and so on.

If we leave aside the problem of *specific historicity* for the time being and try to look upon the total social field of India touched by the Great Tradition, the tribal cultures fall within this field in terms of structural comparison. We have also seen that within this field they represent a distinctive level (relatively the lowest) of complexity. In order to make this distinction clear, it seems best to describe the tribal cultures as a special dimension, namely, the *primitive* or *folk*⁵ dimension of the little traditions of India. At least, on a formal level of abstraction, the folk (or tribal), peasant and urban dimensions of Indian tradition and culture-community represent a series of increasingly complex levels of socio-cultural integration with evidence of continuity in core pattern.

A comprehensive understanding of the development of the primary civilization of India will thus inevitably involve a clear understanding of the primitive level of manifestation of core traditions and their supporting social organization, as they are still partially preserved among contemporary tribes.

Students of classical Indian philosophy and art, like A. Coomarswamy have been struck by its essentially non-puritanical and expressedly joy-oriented sensual core (Coomarswamy 1948). Life is conceived of as a great festivity where spiritual qualities are to be attained by intensive participation. This is, in a way, a synthesized and abstracted version of a primitive hedonistic world-view. The slow rate of technological development in India allowed the classical dimension of the Great Tradition to maintain a nourishing contact with the primitive core of community life.

⁵ The writer is inclined to use 'folk' in place of 'primitive' to avoid the popular derogatory connotation of the latter term.

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FAMILY STRUCTURE OF THE RABHAS OF ASSAM

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Introduction

DURING the winter months of 1955, a preliminary investigation on the structure of the family was carried out by the writer among the Rabhas of Baida and Daranggiri and the neighbouring areas. Baida is a small locality situated at a distance of about eight miles from Lakhipur, the headquarters of the Mechpara zemindary, in the direction of Goalpara town, and Daranggiri is located at a distance of about fifty-four miles from Gauhati on the way to Goalpara.

The Rabhas constitute an important part of the plains tribes of Assam. Their total numerical strength is 84,264 individuals (1941 Census) ; and they are fairly distributed in the districts of Goalpara, Kamrup, Darrang and Garo Hills, but their concentration is found in the south of Goalpara.

The tribe itself has been divided into several sections, namely, Pati, Rangdani, Maitori, Dahuri, Bitlia, Shonga, Hana, etc. The first three form the major bulk of the population. In south Goalpara, the Patis occupy the eastern part, while the Rangdani are confined to the central portion of the region.

The Rabhas are farmers. The plough is their principal agricultural implement. Other implements as well as methods of agriculture followed by the Rabhas are similar to those of the ordinary non-tribal Assamese cultivators. The Patis are highly acculturated people and have adopted various cultural traits, including religious beliefs and practices, customs and manners and the like, from the neighbouring Assamese

Hindus. Many of them have adopted Hinduism. They have abandoned their own dialect in favour of Assamese. The Rangdanis too have been much influenced by the Hindus, but not to the same extent as the Patis. They retain their own dialect, but most of them can understand and speak Assamese as well.

Data were collected from among 110 Rangdani and 50 Pati families in two centres, one in Baida and the other in Daranggiri. In this article, an attempt has been made to study the size and composition of the family.

The Data

Family-Size

TABLE 1

Class of Family	No. of family members	<i>Pati</i>		<i>Rangdani</i>	
		No.	%	No.	%
1. Very small	3 or less	7	14	6	5.4
2. Small	4-6	23	46	66	60.0
3. Medium	7-9	13	26	24	21.8
4. Large	10-12	5	10	12	10.9
5. Very Large	13 or more	2	4.2	2	1.8

From Table 1 it appears that in both the groups, Small family occurs in the highest frequency. The percentage is higher in the Rangdani (60%) than among the Pati (46%). Medium family is also not uncommon among the Pati (26%) as well as the Rangdani (21.8). Large family is found in almost equal percentages in both the Pati (10.9%) and the Rangdani (10%). Very Small family occurs in a higher frequency among the Pati (14%) in comparison with 5.4% among the Rangdani. Very Large family is rare in both the groups.

Type of Family

TABLE 2

Family type	<i>Pati</i>		<i>Rangdani</i>	
	No.	%	No.	%
<i>1. Elementary :</i>				
(i) H and W with unmarried issue or issues	16	32	46	41.8
(ii) Reduced by death of one parent	3	6	7	6.4
(iii) H and W without issue	3	6	2	1.8
<i>2. Intermediate :</i>				
(iv) F or M with married children, with or without other unmarried issue	6	12	16	14.5
(v) Married B with unmarried B and/or S	2	4	0	0
<i>3. Joint :</i>				
(vi) Parents with married son, with or without other issue	2	4	16	14.5
(vii) Married B living with married B, without parents	4	8	1	0.9
(viii) F and/or M with married sons	2	4	16	14.5
<i>4. Compound :</i>				
(ix) A group consisting of a man and two or more wives with their children	3	6	—	—
(x) Do. with unmarried B and/or S, with or without a parent	1	2	—	—
(xi) A group formed by the remarriage of a widow or widower having children by a former marriage	2	4	4	3.6
(xii) Do. with unmarried B and/or S, with or without a parent	2	4	—	—
<i>5. Joint-Compound :</i>				
(xiii) Combination of (xi) and (vi)	2	4	2	1.8
(xiv) Combination of (vii) and (ix)	1	2	—	—

Family type	<i>Pati</i>		<i>Rangdani</i>	
	No.	%	No.	%
(xv) Combination of (viii) and (xi)	1	2	—	—
Symbols : F=Father	H=Husband		B=Brother	
M=Mother	W=Wife		S=Sister	

Elementary family occurs dominantly in both the groups, the percentage being higher among the Rangdani (50%) than among the Pati (44%). One Rangdani elementary family of type (i) consists of a married couple and an adopted son.

Intermediate family is observed in almost equal percentages among the two groups, namely, 16% in the Pati and 14·5% in the Rangdani.

The frequency of Joint family is very high among the Rangdani (29·9%) in comparison with the Pati (16%). Again, among the Pati, the joint family, where two more married brothers live together without their parents, which is commonly known as horizontally joint family, is found in a high percentage (8%) in comparison with the same among the other two groups (4%); while among the Rangdani, this type is rare (0·9%), but the other two types occur equally in high percentages (14·5%).

Compound family is rare among the Rangdani, while its percentage (14·5%) is equal to that of the Joint family and Intermediate family among the Pati. Of the four types of Compound family, as shown in the table, only one type, that is, a group formed by the remarriage of a widow or widower having children by a former marriage, is present among the Rangdani (3·6%). Polygynous family was not found among them. On the other hand, it occurs in 6% among the Pati families. Thus it appears that the system of polygyny is not prevalent among the Rangdani though it is permissible, according to the information the author received regarding marriage customs; but it is practised by the Pati of Daranggiri to some extent.

For the convenience of description, three types of Joint-

Compound family have been formulated. They are as follows :

(xiii) This type includes a family in which a widower, having children by his former marriage, married a woman and has children as a result of the second union. One of his sons is married. Such a type is found to occur in 4% among the Pati and 1·8% among the Rangdani.

(xiv) Among the Pati, one family was found which consists of two married brothers and their parents, one of the two brothers having two wives.

(xv) In another family of the Pati, a widower having two sons by his former marriage, married a woman who gave birth to two sons. All the four brothers are married.

Three Rangdani males and one Pati male were found to reside in their respective father-in-law's house. These families have been included under vertically joint family, that is type (vi).

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT IN A MUNDA VILLAGE

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Introduction

IN Free India, government-sponsored panchayats have been established in tribal villages as in ordinary villages inhabited by Hindu or Muslim farmers. In most parts of Chotanagpur, the traditional system¹ has disappeared, but there are some pockets where it is still fairly strong. Fieldwork was undertaken in one such pocket in the Khunti Subdivision of the Ranchi district, forty miles from Ranchi.

The village lies under the jurisdiction of Tapkara village panchayat. Tapkara is a small business centre where a weekly market is held every Saturday. There are two churches run by the English and German missions. The surrounding area is predominantly Christian.

The village is divided into six wards or tolas whose populations are noted below.

Total	No. houses or families	Male	Female	Total
Munda tola	20	65	60	125
Pahan tola	23	59	56	115
Mahto tola	11	30	43	73
Tala tola	12	35	40	75
Soso tola	7	21	25	46
Jhera tola	7	23	24	47
Total	80	233	248	481

¹ For a description of the traditional system, see Roy, S. C. : *Mundas and Their Country, Ranchi*, 1912.

The first five tolas are peopled by Mundas. There are only two Lohar families. The Jhera tola has no Christian member and the little community is dependent on the dominant population. Among the Munda, there are no unconverted families. All belong to the German Mission and S. P. G. Mission. There are two churches in the village, both built by the initiative of the villagers. Village people were reluctant to reveal the reason why there were two churches. It was, however, discovered that there were two factions in the village and there was a difference of opinion as to the siting of the church between the leaders. The factions were represented by the Munda and Pahan Khunt or lineages. In important village affairs, even now, if there was divergence of public opinion it was always oriented on the line of cleavage between the Pahan Khunt and the Munda Khunt. The history of the cleavage dates back to the late nineteenth century when the British administrative system was making itself felt in the remote villages, and there was a strife in every Munda village regarding leadership which was disputed by the Munda (secular headman) and the Pahan (religious headman). This strife has been referred to by Hoffmann and Lister in their memorandum when dealing with the reasons of the break-up of the Khuntkatti system.

Cases within a Village

The dominant clan in this village is Guria. Very few families belong to other clans and these families are affines of Guria families. There are the three lineages or Khunts of the Guria clan, the Pahan Khunt, Munda Khunt and the Mahto Khunt. In each of the Khunts, there is a recognized social head called the *Khunt dar*. The *Khunt dar's* position is not hereditary, but the most important person in respect of education, birth and influence is recognized as the *Khunt dar* by the rest of the members of the lineage. We did not come across a tola panchayat in this village as reported from certain neighbouring villages. The *Khunt dar* provides a link between the members of his lineage and the village panchayat. Every case which occurs in his area is reported to him in the first

instance. It is he who moves in the matter and gets together a meeting of the village or H a t u panchayat. In the village panchayat any person can attend and speak. Women however do not attend. All cases other than homicide can be decided by the village panchayat. A review of some cases dealt with by the village panchayat will give an idea of the state of crime and punishment in Koenara.

Cases within a Village

1. There was a jack-fruit tree on the border of the fields of Mansidh and his uncle. From the time of the partition, the ownership of the tree was disputed between them. The tree was possessed by Mansidh while the fruits were enjoyed by his uncle. The case was taken to the H a t u panchayat for decision. The decision was that Mansidh was the owner of the tree and his uncle's claim was not admitted.

2. Tunta Munda, a resident of Koenara, once saw a pig eating crops in his field. He chased the pig, but when he entered the village, the pig mingled with a herd of pigs grazing there. Tunta failed to recognize the pig which had eaten his crop. He followed another pig and later on killed it. The owner of the second pig, Johan, appealed to the village panchayat. Tunta had to pay a fine of Rs. 25 to the aggrieved party.

3. Masih Prakash Mahto once killed a sheep which was eating paddy in his field. Before other villagers, he declared that the sheep was being carried off by a hyena and that he got it that way. But a person had seen him killing the sheep. The meat of the sheep was eaten by many people. The person who had seen him killing the sheep disclosed the matter and a suit was brought against him by the owner before the panchayat. Masih Prakash was fined to cover the value of the sheep, which was paid to the complainant.

4. For a long time, there was a strained relation between Johan and his son Mansidh. The latter had deserted his father in old age and allowed him to starve. The father lodged a complaint with the Khuntidar, who called a meeting of the panchayat. The decision was that, so long as the father was alive, his son had to maintain him. The case was compromised and the son begged pardon from the father. He also promised not to neglect him for the rest of his life.

5. Once a violent quarrel occurred between a father and the son. The father gave a hard blow to his son which caused bleeding. The son was going to inform the police, but the villagers requested him to desist and assured him that justice would be done in the village panchayat. The case was brought before the panchayat; but as it was an insignificant one, a compromise was effected and the parties had to sign an agreement not to quarrel in future. Failure to keep the agreement made the erring party liable to a fine of Rs. 50.

6. There was a fight between two buffaloes belonging to Johan and Shanti. During the fight the leg of Johan's buffalo was fractured. Johan took the case to the panchayat and claimed damages from Shanti. After a hot discussion, it was decided that half of the price of the buffalo be given to Johan Munda if he wanted to retain it ; otherwise he would get the full price according to the current market value. Johan agreed to retain the buffalo and received half its value as compensation.

7. Once the mother of Habil Guria stole some paddy from the store of Johan Guria. The son of the owner caught her. Johan reported the matter to the panchayat. When the panchayat met, she was found guilty and was fined Rs. 15 which was the price of one k a t (about a maund) of paddy.

8. Niranjan Topno and Phulmoni Guria fell in love and a child was born of their union. Later on, Niranjan had illicit relations with another girl, Lily Guria, with the result that the latter conceived. Niranjan never told Phulmoni or Lily that he had relations with both of them at the same time. But the secret leaked out and a case was instituted in the village panchayat. The panchayat gave the following verdict.

- a. Niranajan had to marry one of the two girls and pay maintenance to the other.
- b. As Lily Guria had already conceived through him, she could not be married to any one else. So Niranjan had to marry her.
- c. Phulmoni would have the right of full maintenance from Niranjan for herself and her son. Some land was accordingly registered in the name of her son for their maintenance.
- d. Phulmoni was permitted to marry any one whom she wished, but would not be able to take her son along with her as he was the legitimate heir of Niranjan.
- e. If Niranajan did not have any male issue from Lily Guria in future, the son of Phulmoni would exercise full rights of succession as his legitimate heir.

9. Jusup Guria fell in love with Thibi Lugum and brought her to his own house and began to live with her without the consent of the girl's parents. So her parents brought the case before the panchayat. On enquiry it was found that Jusup and Thibi were found willing to marry each other. The parents could not object to the union, but they were entitled to get the bride-price from Jusup. So Jusup was directed to pay the bride-price, which he did. As it was a happy occasion, the panchayat claimed a feast from Jusup, who later on met the cost of the feast.

10. Once Markas Munda stole into the house of Mansidh a dead of night with the intention of committing adultery with the wife of Mansidh. The woman raised a hue and cry and awoke all the members of her household. Markas Munda was caught and

brought before the panchayat. A fine of Rs. 100 was imposed upon him.

11. A woman went to the house of her neighbour to grind millets. After having done her work, she returned to her own home. Meanwhile the woman in the other house discovered that the necklace of her daughter was missing. She suspected that the woman who had come to her house to grind millets had stolen it. She began to abuse that woman loudly. When the latter's husband heard the abuse, he was angry. He approached the former and asked her as to why she was cursing his wife. A hot discussion followed, ending in a scuffle between the two. Ultimately the panchayat was referred to by the parties. Mangra Maharaj, the head of the Guria Parha (federation of villages) presided over the meeting. The old woman was asked to produce evidence about the theft of her daughter's necklace by her neighbour's wife. She could not do so. The complainant was very angry, as he thought that he and his wife had been cursed and maligned for no fault of theirs. The panchayat counselled an agreement between the two. Ultimately both the parties shook hands in front of the assembled gathering. Before the meeting was held, the complainant paid Rs. 1/4 as court fee to the panchayat. Later on, a fine equal to that sum was imposed on the old woman for wrongfully abusing her neighbour and his wife.

Cases between Residents of Two Villages

Cases which involve people living in two villages or relate to the infringement of some serious social taboo are dealt with by the Parha panchayat. A Parha is a group of villages belonging to the same clan in this area. Most of the villages in this area are one-clan villages. Koenara is the Maharajgarh or the seat of the head of the Guria Parha. Sixteen villages comprise this Parha, known after the Guria clan. For many years its head has been the octogenarian Mangra Maharaj. The meeting of the Parha is held in the village of the accused. Three recent cases dealt with by the Guria Parha panchayat are given below.

1. Danga and Budhni, both of whom belonged to the same Guria clan, fell in love with each other and wanted to marry. But marriage within the clan is entirely forbidden. When their love became publicly known, a meeting of the Parha was convened at the instance of one of the rajas. The girl Budhni was pregnant. The panchayat came to the decision that when the child would be born it will be entitled to a maintenance allowance of one and a half maunds of paddy per month from Danga. The boy and the girl were asked to separate. But the child of Budhni could not be the legal heir of Danga and, should the former run away, the

maintenance allowance would revert to Danga. A fine of Rs. 12/8 was levied on Danga and Budhni respectively. Besides the fine the parties had to feast the members of the panchayat.

2. Another meeting of the Parha panchayat was called recently to decide a land dispute between Daud Guria and his uncle, Tempo Guria. Daud Guria lost his parents at the age of five. He was brought up by his maternal uncle. When he attained majority he was married and claimed a share in the joint property from his uncle. Tempo was in no mood to give any land to Daud, declaring that the latter was not his nephew. Daud requested the Church people to mediate on his behalf, but Tempo did not pay any heed. Daud then approached the missionary at Murhu to intercede, but this was without any result. At last Daud took his complaint to the Parha panchayat. The panchayat ruled that Daud was the nephew of Tempo and was entitled to a share equal to that of his father to which he would have succeeded, had partition taken place in his father's time. Tempo was compelled to give Daud's share from the joint property. Tempo's compliance with the ruling of the Parha panchayat was unwilling and he filed a case in the Government court at Khunti. At Khunti, the decision did not differ from that of the Parha panchayat. Tempo's disregard of the judgement of the Parha panchayat was regarded as a contempt of court and he was fined Rs. 60.

3. One Luther Bania of Tapkara enticed Pandry Guria of Koenara and began to live with her. When the affair became publicly known, objection was raised by the girl's parents. The girl's father filed a case in Khunti court, where the culprit was fined Rs. 100. After that, Pandry began to live with her parents. When it came to the knowledge of other people of the clan, the father was excommunicated for receiving into his house a daughter who had lived with another person. The father filed a request before the Parha panchayat for receiving them back into the tribal fold. The panchayat decided to turn the girl out of Munda society as she was corrupted. Luther was again fined Rs. 60 for having spoilt the girl. The parents of the girl were then re-admitted to the Munda fold.

Special Cases

Sometimes there are cases in which it is very difficult to come to a decision, or the decision is not obeyed by the guilty parties. In that case, an appeal is made from the H a t u panchayat to the Parha Panchayat. But if the latter fail to enforce a decision, a joint meeting of several Parhas takes place. Such a joint meeting held a two-day session at Gandauli on the 14th and 15th of March, 1956. Below is a description of the details of the case, as well as the proceedings of the joint meeting.

Yusuf Dahanga and Albina Dahanga, both of whom belonged to one clan, were accused of incest in village Gandauli. The village panchayat could not pronounce any judgement as Yusuf did not admit his guilt. At the Parha level, too, Yusuf did not make any admission. Ultimately the head of the Dahanga Parha requested the heads of Guria and Kongari Parhas to attend a joint meeting for deciding the case. Guria Maharaj could not attend, but sent his deputy, Paulus Guria, the Raja of Kalet, at the head of a delegation of ten members. Seven representatives came from the Kongari Parha, six from Kandulana, five from Topno, two from Lugum and one each from Hembrom, Horo and Champi. All the office-bearers of the Dahanga Parha panchayat were present.

At the outset, Barnabas Kongari was appointed as the President and Paulus Guria, the Vice-President of the joint meeting. Augustine Dahanga was nominated Secretary to the conference. When the session started, some procedural rules were announced by Paulus, the acting President. The court fee was fixed at Rs. 15, which was paid promptly. The boy and the girl were then cross-examined after the administration of an oath. After the latter's statement was over, her thumb impression was taken on paper. The boy on examination flatly denied the allegation. Two witnesses produced by the boy's side were examined by the court. On the day following, the girl was examined by all members. Thereafter the boy was again examined. It was evident from the statements of the boy that he was telling a lie. All his answers were vague. An old person was fined twenty rupees for giving false evidence in the case. In the end, the President posed two alternatives before the boy. Either he should accept his guilt or should declare that he did not care for the Parha or his fellow villagers. If he chose the latter course, he would be turned out from the village and would be denied protection of the tribal law. After this the culprit admitted his guilt before the assembly and prayed for forgiveness. Now it was the duty of the Court to punish the culprit. Punishments awarded previously by each Parha for clan incest were examined and it was ultimately decided that the scale of punishment prevailing in Guria Parha should be awarded. The following fine was imposed on the boy :

Cash fine	Rs. 25
Rice	3 maunds
Pulses	5 seers
1 goat or big pig	

The girl was sentenced to pay a fine amounting to half of the boy's fine. They were also asked to cease to have any further connection with each other.

Both parties paid the fine promptly. Thereafter, the Court decided on the future of the unborn child. If a son was born to Albina he was to be provided with *d o n* (fertile low-lying rice land) in which one maund of paddy seedlings could be sown and *t a n r* (not so fertile upland, fit for other crops) in which half a

maund of seedlings could be sown. In case a daughter was born, she was to be maintained out of the produce of the land. After her marriage, the land would revert to Yusuf Dahanga. The members of the panchayat went to see the lands and transfer deeds were prepared accordingly.

Thus ended a difficult case in which the co-operation not only of members of one clan was required, but that of the entire neighbourhood. It was under the pressure of strong public opinion and on pain of excommunication that the accused admitted his guilt and allowed the Parha panchayat to play their part in meeting the ends of justice.

Observations

A review of the working of the judicial system of Koenara reveals certain important features of the political system of Munda which they have retained up to modern times.

1. Like all peoples, the Mundas are sometimes involved in offences of diverse kinds and have to punish the culprits. They have from very ancient times a judicial system through which it is possible to dispense justice speedily and effectively.

2. If a party is dissatisfied with the findings of one court, appeal may be preferred to a higher court.

3. Contact with Government courts has acquainted some people with the procedure therein. Such procedures have been adopted in the Parha courts.

4. The verdict of the traditional courts is generally acceptable to the people at large, because those who sit in judgement are people who command respect and confidence and whose office does not depend on election. Village leaders and Parha leaders can therefore give impartial judgement without caring for the favour or frown of the powers that be.

5. Now-a-days, through contact with outsiders, certain people have been found to give false evidence and make false statements even on oath. It is evident that the fear of retribution is growing less and less.

6. The Munda do not relish interference with their traditional institutions, and it is better that they should be left alone and even strengthened in suitable cases. Instead of establishing new elective panchayats, the Government should strengthen

the existing institutions not only for judicial administration, but also as an instrument of village welfare activities.

7. H a t u and P a r h a panchayats are not in decay as is generally supposed, at least in some areas. They are highly effective and influential bodies, and the villagers of Koenara prided themselves on the fact that few cases go to police stations or law courts from that area.

The importance of the Parha system in mobilizing public opinion among the villagers has been realized by political parties in Chotanagpur. Now-a-days, Parhas do not meet only to try cases but also to discuss ways and means for their own uplift and to air their grievances or to hear political leaders. It is time that Government realized the importance of these bodies and utilized them for promoting welfare work among the tribal peoples. By working through traditional organizations, Government could gain the confidence of the tribal people, and by doing so, some of the most pressing problems of Chotanagpur would lend themselves to an easier solution.

VARIATION IN SEX-RATIO IN BENGAL DURING 150 YEARS

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Calcutta

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IN this discussion we have confined ourselves to what was known as the Bengal Presidency under British rule. We have not discussed the 1951 Census figures of West Bengal and East Pakistan, as on account of the mass migration of the Hindus from East Pakistan, and to a lesser extent of the Muslims from West Bengal and the rest of India to East Pakistan, the statistics are thrown out of gear.

The number of females per 1,000 males in the *actual* enumerated population of Bengal during the census period from 1872 to 1941, as at each census, is given in the table below.

Year of Census	All Religions	Hindu	Muslim
1872	992	1,003	987
1881	994	999	988
1891	973	969	977
1901	960	951	968
1911	945	931	949
1921	932	916	945
1931	924	908	936
1941	899	869	921
Decrease in 69 years	-93	-134	-66

The decrease in sex-ratio per year is 1.35. There were relatively more females among the Hindus than amongst the Muslims at the earlier censuses ; and that decrease of females

amongst the Hindus is *twice* greater than that amongst the Muslims.

A part of the decrease in sex-ratio is due to migration—more immigrant males (mostly Hindus) coming to Bengal than females. Immigration is more active in cities and urban areas than in rural areas. To appreciate how far the decrease in sex-ratio may be due to immigration, we give below the sex-ratio at the different censuses among the rural population as well as among the natural population, calculated by deducting the immigrants from the actual recorded population and adding the persons born within the area but enumerated elsewhere.

Number of females per 1,000 males

Year of Census	All Religions, Bengal, Actual Population	Rural Areas	Natural Population
1872	992	1,007	n. a.
1881	994	1,006	1,013
1891	973	990	995
1901	960	982	982
1911	945	971	970
1921	932	961	954
1931	924	955	942
1941	899	942	n. a.
Difference between 1872-1941	-93	-65	
between 1881-1931	-70	-61	-71

n. a.=not available.

At the first census of 1872, there are good reasons to suppose that more females escaped enumeration than males, especially in rural areas. The proportion of females, therefore, in the actual population is likely to be higher than that recorded. The slight increase in the sex-ratio for All Religions and All Bengal between 1872 and 1881 may be due to this cause, and may not be a real increase in the sex-ratio.

Even in the Natural Population the sex-ratio is decreasing.

What this decrease is due to, has got to be investigated. From the recorded census data it may legitimately be inferred that there were more females than males in the pre-census period of the 19th century. At the same rate of increase backwards, the sex-ratio would be some 1,073 about 1801 A. D.

The prevalence of polygamy among the high class Moham-medans, and among the high caste Hindus, especially of reckless polygamy amongst the Kulin Brahmins, tend to support the view that there were more than enough females for all males in Bengal. In the middle of the last century, the Hon'ble, the Maharaja of Burdwan and some 21,000 other Hindu inhabitants of Bengal prayed to the Government for an enactment to prevent the abuses attending the practice of polygamy among the Hindus. In their petition they cited cases of men who had married 82, 72, 65, 60 and 42 wives, and have had 18, 32, 41, 25 and 32 sons, and 26, 27, 25, 15 and 16 daughters. There were 148 sons to 109 daughters born to them.

It should not, however, be inferred that the excess of females is anything proportional to the extreme polygamy prevalent among the Kulin Brahmins. Many Brahmins, lower in the social hierarchy, had to remain bachelors throughout life.

When the Hindu Widow Remarriage Act of 1856 was passed at the instance of Pandit Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar one of the objections raised was that there was a great excess of females amongst the Hindus and they were finding it difficult to marry the maids ; if the widows were permitted to re-marry the proportion of maids remaining unmarried would increase. Though there were no statistical data to support the contention it was believed to be very near the truth by competent observers.

But has there been always an excess of females in the population of Bengal ? The recorded data so far available do not support the inference. They may be objected to as imperfect ; but there are enough data to support the view that there was a shortage of females in the first half of the 19th century ; and the excess of females observed at the earlier censuses is more or less an accident—a temporary passing phenomenon.

Now, with our data.

(1) **Purnea**

Henry Thomas Colebrooke, the famous Sanskritist and Judge, published his *Remarks on the Husbandry and Internal Commerce* in the opening years of the nineteenth century. In its Advertisement he wrote, 'It may be proper to apprise the reader, that the original treatise was written in 1794, and was corrected for this edition in 1803.'

In a footnote to the chapter on population he notes :

'Estimates have been attempted from the number of inhabitants found in a few villages, deducing thence an argument applicable to the whole number of Mauzas. Such inquiries have been too limited to afford sufficient grounds for an accurate estimate ; but the results, which have come to our knowledge, exhibit 179 inhabitants in each village, viz. 92 males and 87 females' (Mauzas are taken as equivalent to villages).

There was an official enquiry in the province (not merely the present district) of Puranya. The results are thus summarized by H. T. Colerbrooke :—

'16. An actual ascertainment found 80,914 husbandmen holding leases, and 22,324 artificers paying ground rent, in 2,784 villages upon 2,531 square miles. Allowing five to a family, this gives more than 203 to a square mile.'

The average number of inhabitants in a village is 185 persons. So Colebrooke's enquiry could not have covered the entire area. Even if we assume that by a few villages Colebrooke meant to say one or two or three per cent. of the total number of villages taken here and there at random, the sex-ratio given is sufficiently accurate for our purpose.

The enquiry seems to have been made a little earlier than 1794. The enquiries made may be insufficient to form an estimate of the total population of the country, for much depends upon the areas of mauzas or villages which vary from district to district and upon the density of population which also varies greatly in the different parts of the country. But for determining the sex-ratio of the locality it is sufficiently accurate.

The sex-ratio of Puranya (modern Purnea) is found to be 946 about 1794.

A far more valid objection is that Purnea is outside the Bengal Presidency. Our answer is, firstly, Purnea is just on the border of Bengal and in its eastern part is inhabited by the Bengalis ; secondly, then Puranya included a large tract of the purely Bengal districts of Malda and Dinajpur.

The average area of a village or a mauza as given by Colebrooke is 0.91 sq. miles. The average area of a village is :

in the present district of Purnea—1.2 sq. miles

„ „ „ „ „ Malda— 0.76 „

„ „ „ „ „ Dinajpur— 0.41 „

If we confine ourselves to the Police Stations or Thanas between the Ganges and the Mahananda, which portion of Malda was once included in Puranya, the average area of a village is 0.94 sq. miles.

It is very likely that Mr. Colebrooke's enquiry was confined to this region.

Even in these three districts there were more females at the earlier censuses, especially in the natural population. At the time of Colebrooke, immigration and emigration were almost *nil*, especially in rural areas ; what was observed by him was the actual *de jure* population normally resident in the villages and the sex-ratio observed may be taken, therefore, to be that among natural population.

We give below the sex-ratio in the actual and the natural population, wherever available for the present district of Purnea, Malda and Dinajpur.

Number of females per 1,000 males in :—

Year	Actual Population			Natural Population		
	Purnea	Malda	Dinajpur	Purnea	Malda	Dinajpur
1872	957	1,043	931	n. a.	n. a.	n. a.
1881	973	1,047	933	987	1,090	954
1891	958	1,038	915	978	1,075	936
1901	956	1,020	902	983	1,054	932

Year	Actual Population			Natural Population		
	Purnea	Malda	Dinajpur	Purnea	Malda	Dinajpur
1911	957	1,014	897	990	1,036	938
1921	941	1,000	902	957	1,023	931
1931	936	998	900	n. a.	n. a.	n. a.
1941	944	991	892	n. a.	n. a.	n. a.
n. a. = not available.						
Total decrease in sex-ratio between 1881-1921				-30	-67	-23
among Natural Population						

In the first census of 1872, there are reasons to suppose that females were not as accurately enumerated as males. This may be responsible for the apparent increase in the sex-ratio between 1872 and 1881, especially in the backward district of Puranya.

We take Colebrooke's Puranya figures to refer to that portion of Malda which once formed part of Puranya.

The overall decrease in sex-ratio is 67 in 40 years from 1881 to 1921. The average annual rate of decrease is 1.675.

The increase in sex-ratio between 1794, when it was 946 to 1,090 in 1881 gives the average annual rate of increase to be 1.655.

(2) Murshidabad

In 1829 a 'tolerably accurate' (tolerably accurate according to Sir William Wilson Hunter, the author of *Statistical Account of Bengal*) census of the district of Murshidabad was made by Mr. H. V. Hathorne, the Magistrate of the District. The results are given below :—

	Hindu	Mohammedan	Total
Male	2,68,148	2,16,478	4,84,626
Female	2,69,162	1,96,344	4,65,506
Sex-ratio	1,004	909	960

The population enumerated by Mr. Hathorne in 1829 is 9,50,132. The population of the district in 1872 is 12,14,104. The population has increased by 36.6 per cent between 1872

and 1901 ; and it has increased by 27·8 per cent between 1829 and 1872. It may, therefore, be inferred that Mr. Hathorne's enumeration extended over the whole district.

Another fact leads to the same conclusion. The percentage of Mohammedans in 1829 was 43·5.

The percentage of the Mohammedans in the District of Murshidabad at the several censuses has been as follows :—

1872	—	46·1	1921	—	53·6
1881	—	48·1	1931	—	55·6
1891	—	49·5	1941	—	56·5
1901	—	50·8			
1911	—	52·0			

Their relative percentage is increasing ; it may be inferred that it was smaller than 46·1 in 1829. Projection backwards would lead to a figure close upon the recorded figure.

There have been changes in the boundaries of the District between 1829 and 1872, but they are of minor importance.

The sex-ratios of 1829 and of later years are strictly comparable with one another.

Mr. Adams at the time of preparing his *Report on the State of Education in Bengal* collected certain data about male and female populations in certain large areas of the several districts. From them we have calculated the sex-ratios. The figures are given below :—

Area	Male	Female	Sex-ratio	Date of Report
Rajshahi	1,00,579	94,717	941	23-12-1835
City of Murshidabad	62,519	62,285	996	} 28-4-1838
District of Murshidabad	31,560	30,477	966	
Beerblum	23,496	22,920	976	
Burdwan	59,844	56,581	946	

The old city of Moorshedabad included the municipalities of Berhampore (the present district headquarters), Murshidabad and Azimganj (now Jiaganj—Azimganj) and certain other small areas.

The population of these three towns at the different censuses has been as follows :—

	Berhampore	Murshidabad	Azimganj	Total
1872	27,110	24,534	21,648	73,292
1881	23,605	20,841	18,390	62,836
1891	23,515	18,899	16,677	59,091
1901	24,397	15,168	13,385	52,950
1911	26,143	12,669	12,327	51,139
1921	26,670	10,669	11,231	48,570
1931	27,403	9,483	10,988	47,874
1941	41,558	11,498	15,223	68,279

This area has been steadily decreasing in population from 1872 to 1931. The decrease during the 29 years from 1872 to 1901 has been as much as 27·4 per cent and during the first 9 years 14·3%. At the same rate of decay the population in 1838 would be about 1,13,000.

The population in 1838 was 1,24,804 ; and the decrease during the 34 years from 1838 to 1872 has been 41·6 per cent.

The sex-composition of these three towns has been as follows :—

In 1872	—	917
1881	—	1,054
1891	—	950
1901	—	889

The population of the city of Moorshedabad was about 1,25,000 in 1838 ; the population of the district in 1829—nine years earlier—was 9,50,000. The population of the district has increased by 4·0 per cent from 1872 to 1921 ; since when there has been rapid increase of population all over Bengal as well as in India. Neglecting the increase between 1829 and 1838, the population of the city of Moorshedabad was some 13 per cent or about one-eighth the population of the district.

As many Hindu widows used to come there from the interior of the district for taking their daily baths in the sacred Bhagirathi flowing through the city, and as the part of it

named Saidabad, one of the three religious strongholds of neo-Vaishnabism (the other two being Khardah and Santipur), had many female devotees more or less permanently resident there, and as the large Mohammedan retinue of the Nawab Nazim of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa used to have their little harems, it is no wonder that the sex-ratio in the city would be much higher than in the neighbourhood.

Assuming that all these females were drawn from the District, an assumption very near the truth, the sex-ratio in the District including the city was in 1838 about :

$$\frac{7 \times 966 + 996}{8} = 970$$

The sex-ratio increased by 1.1 per year during the period 1829-1838.

Over the entire period of 52 years from 1829 to 1881, the sex-ratio increased at the rate of 2.65 per year.

In the census period, the sex-ratio in the District of Murshidabad is :—

Year	Actual Population	Natural Population
1872	1,093	n. a.
1881	1,092	1,098
1891	1,065	1,085
1901	1,041	1,044
1911	1,023	1,031
1921	1,008	1,007
1931	1,006	n. a.
1941	990	n. a.

Total decrease in sex-ratio among Natural Population in 40 years from 1881 to 1921 is 91.

(3) Rajshahi

From Adam's figures given above we find the sex-ratio in Rajshahi as 941 about 1835.

In the census period, the sex-ratio is :—

	Actual Population	Natural Population
1872	1,014	n. a.
1881	1,001	1,043
1891	1,001	1,031
1901	972	990
1911	961	983
1921	941	965
1931	928	n. a.
1941	914	n. a.

Total decrease in sex-ratio among Natural Population in 40 years from 1811 to 1921 is 78.

It increased from 941 to 1043, i.e. by 102 in 46 years.

(4) Birbhum

From Adam's figures given above we find the sex-ratio to be 976 in 1833.

The sex-proportion in Birbhum during the census period is :—

	Actual Population	Natural Population
1872	1,090	n. a.
1881	1,082	1,094
1891	1,048	1,049
1901	1,029	1,028
1911	1,017	1,018
1921	1,004	1,000
1931	1,005	n. a.
1941	998	n. a.

The decrease in sex-ratio among Natural Population in 40 years from 1881 to 1921 is 94.

The increase was 118 in 43 years.

(5) Burdwan

From Adam's figures as given above we find the sex-ratio for the district to be 946 in 1838.

The following relevant figures for Culna (Kalna) Thana or Police Station in the District of Burdwan from the Bengal Census Report of 1872, p. 93, are interesting :—

'In 1838 Mr. Adam collected certain Statistics. A sample is given here :—

Culna Thana	Villages	Houses	Males	Females	Total
Adam's Census 1838	288	23,346	59,844	56,851	1,16,425
Census of 1872	296	32,452	58,415	63,065	1,21,480

'As the Census included some 325 boats, these figures seem to show that the resident population is no greater now than it was in 1838.'

The sex-proportions as deduced from the above figures are :—

Females to 1,000 males

1838 977

1872 1,286

The sex-ratios at the subsequent censuses are :—

1881	n. a.	1921	1,001
1891	n. a.	1931	979
1901	n. a.	1941	958
1911	1,034	1951	960

The rate of increase (+) or decrease (−) per year for the several periods is shown below :—

1838—1872	+9'1
1872—1911	−6'5
1911—1921	−3'3
1921—1931	−2'2
1931—1941	−2'1
1941—1951	+0'2

There have been various changes in the areas of the District of Burdwan. At one time the entire zemindary of the Maharajadhiraj of Burdwan measuring about 5,174 sq. miles

was called Burdwan (about 1790). The District of Hooghly was called East Burdwan and Bankura, West Burdwan. There have been many transfers and re-transfers of Thanas or Police Stations. At one time Burdwan included the Jehanabad (now called Arambagh) Sub-division of the Hooghly District, and several Thanas of Bankura; and a large portion of the Asansol Sub-division was not included in Burdwan.

The fluctuations in the area of the District may be gathered from the figures given below :—

Area in	Sq. miles
1870	3,156
1871	2,825
1876	3,523
1881	2,697
1921	2,703
1941	2,705
1951	2,716

The sex-ratios in both the actual and the natural populations of the three districts of Burdwan, Bankura and Hooghly are given below :—

Year	Burdwan		Bankura		Hooghly	
	Actual	Natural	Actual	Natural	Actual	Natural
1872	1,044	n. a.	1,016	n. a.	1,069	n. a.
1881	1,083	1,081	1,054	1,030	1,071	1,041
1891	1,038	1,026	1,034	1,011	1,031	1,004
1901	1,004	1,028	1,032	1,012	986	998
1911	997	1,018	1,024	965	961	965
1921	965	985	1,002	998	924	958
1931	934	n. a.	996	n. a.	882	n. a.
1941	893	n. a.	978	n. a.	864	n. a.
Decrease						
1881-1921		- 96		- 32		- 83

The population of these three districts as recorded in the census are :—

	Population in 000's		
	1872	1881	1921
Burdwan	1,482	1,390	1,435
Bankura	969	1,042	1,020
Hooghly	1,119	975	1,080
	3,570	3,407	3,535

To make the census figures and conclusions drawn therefrom comparable with Mr. Adam's figures, which were from enquiries spread over the then district of Burdwan (which included parts of Hooghly and Bankura), we give an weightage of 2 to the Burdwan figures as obtained from the census. The sex-ratios in the Census Reports are for the adjusted populations of the present districts.

The decrease in sex-ratio of Burdwan (for an area comparable with that of Adam) during 1881 to 1921 is therefore 77. The decrease per year works out to 1·92.

The sex-ratio of this area of Burdwan in 1881 was 1,058 for the natural population ; and in 1872 was 1,043 for the actual population. The increase in sex-ratio between 1838 and 1881 is $1058 - 946 = 112$; and the rate of increase per year works out to 2·60.

(6) 24-Parganas

According to the Revenue Survey of the District conducted in 1856, the number of male and female adults and children are :—

	Males	Females
Adults	3,50,466	3,12,578
Children	1,61,026	1,23,134
Total	5,11,492	4,35,712

In the above the population of the Sunderbans has not been taken into account. The sex-proportion in the population is 852. At that time the Sunderbans were being reclaimed and brought under cultivation. The population of the Sunderbans was immigrant in character and therefore there are likely to be more males than females.

The sex-proportion of the District including the Sunderbans is therefore likely to be less than 852.

In 1872 the sex-proportion of the *then* district of the 24-Parganas (which included the entire Satkhira Sub-division of the Khulna District) including the Sunderbans was 912.

The sex-proportion in the present (before 1947) district of the 24-Paraganas during the census period is :—

	Actual Population	Natural Population
1872	969	n. a.
1881	942	n. a.
1891	913	958
1901	902	970
1911	864	970
1921	837	951
1931	852	n. a.
1941	820	n. a.

Bengal

Adam's figures are collected from the districts of Burdwan, Birbhum, Murshidabad and Rajshahi, covering about one-eighth of Bengal's population. In the absence of better data we may regard them as fairly representative of entire Bengal.

As some time was required in collecting Adam's data, say at least 6 months, and as the Rajshahi data, which are nearly one-third of the total, were collected two years earlier, we take the total to represent the sex-ratio as it was in 1836. It was 960 females : 1,000 males.

The increase in sex-ratio between 1836 and 1881 = $1013 - 960 = 53$. This works out to an increase of 1.18 per year.

The decrease in sex-ratio between 1881 and 1931 for the natural population = $1013 - 942 = 71$. This works out to a decrease of 1.42 per year.

From the above sets of data one thing is very clear. The sex-ratio in every region or district was smaller than what it was in 1872 or in 1881 in the actual and the natural population.

The sex ratio in the several districts or regions has increased thus :—

	Sex-ratio in 1881	Increase	Incr ^o ase per year
I. Puranya	1794		
(Malda)	946	1090	144
2. Murshidabad	1829		
	960	1098	138
3. Rajshahi	1835		
	941	1043	102
4. Birbhum	1838		
	976	1094	118
5. Burdwan	1838		
	946	1081	155
6. Bengal	1836		
	960	1013	53

We leave out the figures for the 24 Parganas as they are not comparable with each other for changes in areas of enumeration.

The decrease in sex-ratio of the several regions or districts per year since 1881 is given below :—

1. Puranya	1'67
2. Murshidabad	2'27
3. Rajshahi	1'95
4. Birbhum	2'35
5. Burdwan	1'92
6. Bengal	1'42

The estimated rates of increase before 1881 generally correspond with the rates of decrease since 1881. How close the correspondence is will appear from the following table :—

Area	Increase	Rate of Decrease	Difference	Difference as %
1. Puranya	1'65	1'67	+ '02	1'21
2. Murshidabad	2'65	2'27	- '38	14'3
3. Rajshahi	2'22	1'95	- '27	12'1
4. Birbhum	2'74	2'35	- '39	14'2
5. Burdwan	2'60	1'92	- '68	26'2
6. Bengal	1'18	1'42	+ '24	20'3

The differences noticed may be due to (1) the earlier enumerations being confined to certain selected areas within the district, while the census is spread over the entire district ; (2) changes in boundaries of districts ; (3) relatively more

females having escaped enumeration at the earlier counts ; and (4) comparing proportions perhaps in the actual normally resident population in earlier times with the natural population later on.

The sex-proportion earlier was low ; it was increasing during the first 75 years of the 19th century ; since then it has been decreasing again. Why this is so we have not been able to ascertain. We can at best suggest some answers. The earliest figure (1794) is of Puranya (Malda). In 1770 occurred the Great Famine by which one-third of the population of Bengal was swept away. The famine may have had a differential effect on mortality among males and females. In ordinary famines, even when of some intensity, more males die than females. That has been the Indian experience. But whatever the effect of the Great Famine was, it was mostly wiped away by the births and deaths for a period of nearly a generation. The differential mortality due to famine does not seem to be the cause. There were epidemics in the early years of the nineteenth century.

There was an epidemic of fever in central Bengal in the early forties ; it spread over many districts, and depopulated the Burdwan Division and other districts causing de-growth of population, and lasted for many years. The differential mortality may have increased the sex-ratio before 1872.

But what are the causes of decreasing sex-proportion since then ? Further, the virtual equality of the rates of increase and decrease in the sex-proportion is intriguing.

Food habits of the people have changed slightly. Potato became popular since 1772 ; cauliflowers, cabbages, knol-khol were introduced about 1810 and have become popular since then. Beet-roots and radishes and carrots became popular in the latter half of the 19th century. Celery popularly known as *china-sak* has been becoming popular since 1920. *Kumra* (pumpkin) is known as *bilate* (foreign). *Kumra* has become naturalized and popular about 1750.

Fever epidemics, malaria and kala-azar raged in central, western and northern Bengal from 1830 to 1880. Did it affect the sex-ratio by differential mortality on the sexes ?

PEBBLE-TOOL TERMINOLOGY IN INDIA AND PAKISTAN

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(Received on 20th March, 1957)

IN 1880, the first alleged implements of palaeolithic type were reported from the Punjab,¹ and in 1928 the actual existence of palaeolithic localities in the valley of the Sohan (Soan) river, in what is now West Pakistan, was reported by D. N. Wadia of the Geological Survey of India.² However, it was not until 1936, when H. de Terra announced that a new palaeolithic culture—the Sohanian (or Soanian)—had been discovered by himself together with P. Teilhard de Chardin and T. T. Paterson,³ that the significance of this region for students of palaeolithic archaeology was first recognized. But recent research in the East Punjab (PEPSU) has demonstrated that the distribution of the Sohanian is by no means confined to Pakistan. Indeed both Prüfer⁴ and Sen⁵ have established its presence in the Sirsa valley of Nalagarh, while Deshpande of the Archaeological Department of India has found Sohanian sites in Chittor, Rajasthan,⁶ and B. B. Lal has recently reported additional new localities in the Beas and Banganga valleys, Kangra District⁷—further proof of its extension onto the East Punjab plains of North India during Middle and Late Pleistocene times.

¹ Theobald, 1880 ; Swynnerton, 1880.

² Wadia, 1928, pp. 290 and 346.

³ de Terra, 1936 ; de Terra, Teilhard de Chardin and Paterson, 1936. See also de Terra and Paterson, 1939.

⁴ Prüfer, 1956.

⁵ Sen, 1953 ; 1955.

⁶ Unpublished, based on information received from D. Sen, *in litt.*, dated Calcutta, 4 October 1956.

⁷ Personal letter from B. B. Lal, dated New Delhi, 17 September 1956.

Like the Early Anyathian of Upper Burma, the Choukoutienian of North China, the Patjitanian of Java, the Tampanian of Malaya and the Fingnoian (or Quanoian) of Thailand, the Sohanian is essentially a pebble-tool tradition in which the biface technique only very sporadically occurs.⁸ This evidence supports the view that in southern and eastern Asia the tradition of making primitive pebble-tools persisted very much longer than is the case in Africa, western Asia and Europe. For particularly in Africa pebble-tools comprise a sort of basic substratum, which became of only secondary importance with the introduction and gradual development of the bifacial, hand-axe technique. Insofar as northern India and Pakistan are concerned, however, it now seems apparent that the Sohanian, especially in its early stage, must be regarded as one manifestation of a great complex, or series of assemblages, of choppers and chopping-tools, as well as primitive flake implements, that has a very widespread distribution in southern and eastern Asia. On the other hand, the bifacial Abbevilleo-Acheulian tradition, together with the definitely Levalloisian-type flake element (prepared striking-platform/ tortoise core technique) that is most pronounced in the Late Sohanian, belong to the classic Lower Palaeolithic complex of 'Western' affinities. Therefore, it is of obvious importance that a satisfactory terminology be established and employed for purposes of describing the wide range and variety of pebble-tools that play such a prominent role in the Sohanian and other assemblages belonging to the chopper/chopping-tool, or pebble-tool, complex of the Far East and southern Asia.

The basic tool types - the chopper and the chopping-tool—were originally defined by the present writer in 1943.⁹ It was explained that this terminology was predicated by the form and technique of manufacture of the tools themselves, inasmuch as these factors, rather than hypothetical functions, were (and

⁸ Movius, 1943, 1944, 1948, 1949, 1950, 1953-a, pp. 181-184, 1955. See also Sen, 1954-a; 1954-b; Lal, 1954; Krishnaswami, 1947, and Chakravarti, 1944.

⁹ Movius, 1943, pp. 350-351; 1944, pp. 10-11, 41 and 91. See also Braidwood, 1947, p. 38 and fig. 1.

are for that matter) considered to be fundamental criteria. A large majority of the specimens in question were presumably used for cutting, chopping and scraping, and for this reason it was obviously imperative to subdivide or group them into convenient categories, not based on presumed function, for purposes of description. In this connection, it should be borne in mind that, regardless of what terms are employed, it is only possible to achieve a very low order of objectivity in describing pre-historic cultural materials, since any given verbal label or set of sounds inevitably connotes some sort of association, which is bound to differ in degree depending on the individual and the background of his experience. With respect to the Sohanian of the East and West Punjab, the following terms were proposed.

(a) Chopping-tools

These are core implements usually made on pebbles, or rough more-or-less tabular chunks of silicified or similar types of rock. They are bifacially worked artifacts in the sense that the cutting-edge has been flaked from both sides. This flaking normally extends either along one side or one end only of the piece, so that the opposite end or side, as well as the areas of the upper and lower surfaces left unflaked, exhibit the original cortex of the specimen. In most cases the bifacially produced cutting-edge is markedly sinuous, since it is normally worked by alternate flaking, or rather by the intersection of alternating flake scars. In other words, it is in the form of a broad 'W' in the majority of instances.

(b) Choppers and/or Scrapers

The only essential difference between a chopper and a side-scraper made on a core—both flaked by secondary (often resolved) working on the upper surface along one side only—is one of gross size. In this sense large, crude scrapers and massive scrapers made on cores are called choppers. This type of unifacial tool normally has a round, semi-oval, or almost straight cutting-edge formed by the removal of flakes from the upper surface of the implement only. The cutting edge itself may be

either along the side or across the end of the specimen. In certain instances, however, limited flaking is present on the lower surface, but in most cases this appears to be the result of use. Although many of the implements in this category are core tools made on pebbles or angular chunks of rock, examples manufactured from large flakes are also present.

A *scraper* (normally all these are of the *side* variety) is considered to be a small chopper. Scrapers are usually made on flakes, but core examples also occur. Since the only really satisfactory criterion is size, it will be recognized that at present no hard and fast rule can be made to differentiate between these two classes of implements.

Admittedly each group is a purely artificial category, but it is at once apparent that a very basic and fundamental distinction can be drawn between the two main classes of implements. Chopping-tools invariably exhibit an alternately flaked edge, and for this reason they can be considered as single-edged *bifacial* tools with an irregular, axe-like cutting-edge. On the other hand, choppers are single-edged *unifacial* tools—i.e., they are flaked along one side in one direction only—and they exhibit an adze-like cutting edge. As explained above, certain types of scrapers of the *side*-variety are simply small choppers, but they are normally made on flakes and not cores. They appear to correspond to what the Russian palaeolithic archaeologists call *s k r a b k o*, whereas choppers are called *s k r e b l o*, literally heavy or massive scrapers.¹⁰ However, in dealing with assemblages of pebble-tools in which over three-quarters of the core implement series consists of single-edged, unifacially flaked types of artifacts, it is quite apparent that a satisfactory classification should be adopted for purposes of facilitating the description of the material. At all times it must be borne in mind that any such classification is simply a means to an end. It is for descriptive purposes only and is the work of the investigator and *not* of the people who actually made the tools.

¹⁰ Compare Oklandnikov, 1949 ; Movius, 1953-b, p. 30.

In the interests of simplifying the nomenclature proposed above, D. Sen suggested in his brilliant Presidential Address to the Indian Science Congress in 1954 that the term *chopper* be used in place of *chopping-tool*, and that the *scraper* category be extended to include all artifacts in the *chopper/scraper* groups as defined above.¹¹ In other words he recommends that no distinction be made between core tools manufactured by one-directional flaking, on the one hand, and flake tools secondarily worked by the same technique, on the other. The present writer feels that this will only lead to confusion. For the much abused term *scraper* is already employed with reference to an extremely wide variety of artifacts of the single-edged variety. For instance, in the Mousterian Complex of Western Europe alone, F. Bordes¹² recognizes no less than 21 different types of scrapers, all of which are made on flakes rather than on cores. As stated above, the Sohanian examples are made on pebbles. Furthermore, if one considers that an additional 16 basic types of scrapers normally made on blades occur in the Upper Palaeolithic of the same region, according to the classificatory scheme recently propounded by de Sonneville-Bordes and Perrot,¹³ the basis for the writer's objection to using the term with reference to the Sohanian materials under discussion is even more obvious. It is true that the terminology proposed in this paper has not yet been widely adopted in Africa, where pebble-tool assemblages have been recognized on an almost universal scale. However, in Africa as well as in Europe, the urgent necessity for adopting more precise terms to describe the materials in question is becoming increasingly apparent as more localities yielding pebble-tools are discovered.¹⁴ Certainly, it seems reasonable to insist that it would be stretching the definition of *scraper* altogether too far if all pebble-tools with one-directional flaking

¹¹ Sen, 1954-a, p. 5 ; 1954-b, p. 128.

¹² Bordes, with Bourgon, 1951, p. 6.

¹³ de Sonneville-Bordes and Perrot, 1953, p. 325.

¹⁴ Compare Arambourg, 1953 ; Balout, 1955, pp. 159-173 ; Biberson, 1953.

were included. It was to overcome this difficulty that a more realistic definition of the term *chopper*, as given above, was originally introduced. Consequently the writer feels that it is only going to lead to ambiguity and misunderstanding if the Sohanian materials from North India and Pakistan are referred to as *chopper/scrapper* rather than *chopping-tool/chopper* assemblages. Admittedly the latter terms are somewhat clumsy, but at least they serve a useful purpose in describing the types of artifacts under consideration. In the final analysis this is the primary objective of any classificatory scheme.

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THE SOANIAN AND THE PEBBLE-TOOL COMPLEX IN INDIA

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(Received on 20th March, 1957)

A great range and variety of pebble tools, which Movius describes as a chopping-tool/chopper assemblage, occurs as a characteristic lithic trait in the Lower Palaeolithic culture-complex of India, Pakistan, Burma, China, Malaya and Java. Movius¹ regards the Soanian of the Punjab as a manifestation of a great complex or a series of assemblages of chopper and chopping-tools and primitive flakes that has a wide distribution in southern and eastern Asia. To facilitate description of the pebble tools characteristic of the Soanian and other assemblages, Movius has proposed the nomenclature of chopping-tool/chopper.

A chopper and/or scraper is described by Movius as a unifacial pebble tool flaked on one side in one direction only, with a round, semi-oval or straight cutting edge. The only essential difference between a chopper and scraper is one of gross size, though the scraper is normally made on flake. A chopping tool is described by him as a pebble tool worked bifacially along one side or/and having a sinuous or wavy cutting edge due to alternate flake scars. The butt-end in both cases shows the original pebble cortex.

As there is much confusion in this country regarding the use of this nomenclature in typological description of pebble tools, the writer² felt the need of a simpler and unambiguous nomenclature and proposed the term pebble-scraper and pebble-

¹ Movius, H. L., Jr. : 'The Lower Palaeolithic Cultures of Southern and Eastern Asia'. *Trans. Amer. Phil. Soc.*, vol. 38, pt. IV, 1948.

² Dharani Sen : 'Lower, Palaeolithic Culture-Complex and Chronology in India.' *Pres. Add. Ind. Sc. Congress* 1954,

chopper in place of Movius's chopper (and/or scraper) and chopping-tool respectively. The pebble-scraper (Movius's chopper and/or scraper) is described as a unifacial tool made on p e b b l e with one-directional flaking on one surface along a side or end to form a round, oval or straight working edge by the intersection of the flake scars with the pebbly undersurface. The flake-scraper on the other hand is a unifacial tool made on f l a k e, with one-directional flaking (often secondary and resolved) on the outer or upper surface along a side (or end) to form a round or straight working edge by the intersection of the upper flake scars with the inner main flake surface. The latter type cannot strictly be included within the pebble tool typology.³ Thus we are left with one simple nomenclature—that of pebble-scraper in place of Movius's chopper and/or scraper on pebble. The criterion of gross size as the distinguishing mark between chopper and scraper is also thus dispensed with.

Similarly Movius's c h o p p i n g t o o l—a rather extended term—may be replaced by a simpler term c h o p p e r which is a partly bifacial pebble tool characterized by alternate flaking (two-directional as distinguished from the one-directional pebble scraper) on two surfaces at one end or side of the pebble, producing a ragged or W-shaped cutting edge. In the main, these two terms, pebble-scraper and pebble-chopper, should usefully serve the purpose of describing the basic pebble tool types in India. Due emphasis however must be laid on form and technique and working end in any typological description.

The Soan (or Sohan) culture shows three associated lithic traits : pebble cores, pebble tools and flakes. Among the pebble tools, the two main types chopper (chopping tool of Movius) and scraper (chopper and/or scraper of Movius) are recognized. The Soanian material can be referred to as a pebble.chopper, pebble-scraper and flake assemblage or more simply as pebble and flake tool assemblage. Alternatively, we may as well drop the controversial term 'scraper' altogether from our terminology and use the terms 'u n i f a c i a l

³ Thus the distinction between two scraper types—the one made on pebble and the other on flake is clear.

pebble chopper' and 'bifacial pebble chopper' in place of pebble-scaper and pebble-chopper respectively. The former is characterized by one-directional flaking while the latter mainly by two-directional alternate flaking.

It should be noted that pebble-scaper and chopper tool complex or assemblage is found in India in two entirely different contexts. In East Punjab (India) and West Punjab (Pakistan), the complex always occurs associated with flakes and is generally free of the biface ; while in Peninsular India, as in Madras and Mayurbhanj and elsewhere, it always occurs associated with the biface and may be an element of the same tradition (biface) or related to it.²

The writer therefore feels that a measure of caution and scrutiny is needed before we recognize 'Soan elements' or 'Soan tradition' in the Lower Palaeolithic assemblage of Peninsular India. No doubt mixed or hybrid industries occur in some regions as in Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Mirzapur and elsewhere ; but particular techniques or traditions must be fully recognized before we pass judgement on the typological or technical nature of an industry. As yet the technique of pebble tools has not been fully studied in Asia, nor have the types been standardized. The spatial and vertical distribution of the pebble tool complex is not known with any certainty. The pebble tools found in the Punjab plains should be more fully studied and then compared with those found in central and southern India, particularly in relation to associated lithic traits.

So far as the Soanians are concerned, the pebbles used are mostly water-worn round, discoidal or flattish river-pebbles and are mainly worked either unifacially and by one-directional flaking or bifacially (partly) and by two-directional alternate flaking. There are massive heavy types as well as small light types of pebble tools. In the Soan, the pebble tools are always associated with flakes. This association which is free of the biface characterizes Soanian lithic tradition. The Soanian therefore should be described as a pebble-flake tradition instead of as chopping-tool/chopper tradition as proposed by Movius.

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

NOMADIC CASTES OF GUJARAT

In the article on nomadic castes of India in the Jan.-March 1956 issue, two castes of Gujarat have been mentioned, namely, Gariya Lohar and Waghari. On both these tribes, I have written articles in Gujarati. I had therefore to go into details of those two castes.

In the article, there is a reference to the Wagharis. Wagharis are hunters and fowlers. R. E. Enthoven has given a faint idea of the Waghari caste. Wagharis are divided into many sub-castes ; out of those sub-castes, the Vedavā Wagharis are nomadic. They do not settle permanently in any place. In my village in Ahmedabad Dist., I have seen them wandering from one place to another. They live in tents made of hand-woven rough cloth. Last week, I went to my village which is at a distance of two miles from the railway station. As I walked home, I saw three families of Vedavā Wagharis who had encamped in a field. Their main profession is purchasing calves and selling them to villagers. They differ only in their habit of wandering from other Wagharis. Their marriage ceremony is of a peculiar nature. Along with the Gariya Lohar the Vedavā Waghari should be included as one of the important nomadic castes of Gujarat.

Another one is Chhārās of Gujarat. The Chhārās are also divided into Chhārās and Ādodiyās.

26th March, 1957
Ahmedabad.

Pushker Chandervaker

MIGRATION OF LABOURERS

A pilot study of cases of migration of rural people from U. P. and Bihar to Howrah, employed in the jute industry, revealed that what is generally referred to as migration is in truth only temporary movement. In my studies, most of the people were found to have come here not after having aban-

doned their original village homes but, on the contrary, having come in the majority of cases singly, leaving the rest and major portion of their families at home, as the following table will show.

Family position of the subjects at Howrah	With entire family	With part of their families here, part remaining at home	Only individuals here, rest of the family at home	Total
Distribution	5	8	73	86

Indeed, as many as 79 interviewees from the entire sample of 86 were found remitting savings from their wages to their village homes, amounting to approximately $\frac{1}{3}$ (on an average) of their total earnings. It was also learnt from the people that they would continue to work here as long as they were able, and as soon as they grew old or conditions in their villages improved they would go back home to work.

The present study also suggests that the movement of the people in question has resulted from the interplay of several factors instead of the commonly acknowledged economic incentive ; such as, the insufficiency of land, disorganization of village industries, the hard life of landless agricultural labourers, debts, and so on. Emotional disturbances arising out of certain social situations have also been responsible for the observed movement in a number of cases. Moreover, some of the people interviewed were attracted to the particular area or factories in question because relations like one's father, brother, near kinsmen, or friends were already working there.

6th March, 1957
Calcutta University.

Surendra Kumar Navlakha

TRIBES OF KERALA

Kerala is the home of twenty distinct tribes presenting many interesting aspects of tribal life, but none come under the classification of 'Criminal Tribes'. All of them have been notified as Scheduled Tribes under the President's Order of 1950.

According to the figures of Determination of Population Order 1950, the total population of Travancore-Cochin State is 23,000. The Census of India states it to be 26,580, and according to the estimate of the Registrar General, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, the total population is 33,456, and this figure has been reproduced by the Travancore-Cochin State Government. The population of Malabar which is estimated to be 48,000 should be added to give the total figure for the new Kerala State. The total population of Kerala will be 71,000 if the figures of the 1950 Order are accepted; the total will be 74,800, if 1951 Census figures are accepted, and it will be 81,455 if the official figures maintained by the State are accepted. These figures include the tribes of the five taluks of southern Travancore which have been annexed to Madras and does not include the population of that part of South Canara annexed to Kerala. It is most unfortunate that the estimates of responsible government organizations display such wide differences.

The State-maintained figures as published in the Primary Report of the State Constituted Committee Enquiring into the Conditions of Scheduled Tribes states that the total population of 33,456 is made up of Kadars 287, Kanikars 7,160, Malai Arayans 3,883, Malai Pandarams 201, Malayans 3,424, Malayadiars 3,422, Mannans 1,695, Muthuvans 1,399, Puliyan 520, Ulladans 6,106, Uralis 5,181, and Vizhavans 178. The figures for Malabar which now forms part of Kerala are, Aranadans 1,000, Kathinayakans 1,500, Kurumans 5,000, and Paniyans 40,500. The Report of the State Committee admits that no figures are available with regard to Kochu Vedans, Malai Vedans, Pulayas and Hill Pulayas. State figures for 1911 are 21,887; in 1921, it was stated to be 19,134, and in 1931 it was 26,506.

The figures maintained by the State are said to have been obtained from the Registrar General and they indicate an increase of 12,569 during the period 1911-1951. This conflicts with the figures contained in Appendix VII of the Report (1955) by the Commissioner for Advancement of Tribes which was placed before Parliament. The Commissioner

states that there has been a total decrease of 55,95,502 in the tribal population of India and that the decrease in Travancore-Cochin is 1,11,320 during the decade 1941-1951. The Tribal population of Travancore-Cochin is 0.28 of the total population and that in Kerala would be higher. It is high time correct statistics are obtained.

Mackay's recommendations state that no figures are available regarding four tribes, but there is a scheme being recommended for Hill Pulayas of whom no figures are available. Hill Pulayas commonly called Pampa Pulayas are inhabitants of Champakad, Vambanad valley, Palnis and Anamalais. It is not at all difficult to get a correct figure for that tribe. The figures for Kadars of Parambikulam and Kuriarkutty cannot be accepted as correct and the total for Kanikarans is much lower than what it should be.

It would be unwise to put off the enumeration of the tribes till 1961 when the next census is going to take place. Something should be done immediately.

24th November, 1956
Ernakulam.

A. A. D. LUIZ

BOOK REVIEWS

Piecing Together the Past : THE INTERPRETATION OF ARCHÆOLOGICAL DATA, by V. Gordon Childe. Pp. vii + 176. Routledge & Kegan Paul, London. 1956. 18s. net.

After all archæological remains are the fossilized expressions of human behaviour ; and it should be the aim of an archæologist to reconstruct that behaviour from the data which he laboriously unearths. The theoretical methods of identification, dating and the reconstruction of migration or of the diffusion of cultures are often described in text-books ; but the manner in which they can be interpreted and thus help in building up the socially approved ways in which men lived is a matter which has received comparatively less attention in current manuals of archæology. In the present book, Professor Gordon Childe has addressed himself particularly to the latter questions ; and he has succeeded in producing an eminently readable and instructive book. Naturally, questions like diffusion, independent invention or evolution and progress have come in for some amount of discussion, in course of which Professor Childe suggests that a scientist should not take sides in accordance with the points of view which he finds emotionally satisfactory. He must rigidly build on the basis of the facts which he laboriously observes.

In course of the story of human evolution which archæologists have thus far succeeded in building up, we notice that there is sufficient evidence of technological progress through the accumulation of inventions ; and Professor Childe suggests that the proliferation of the types of artifacts was accompanied by a corresponding progress in the region of the mind. The mind does function as a significant factor in the chain of technological progress of mankind. But sometimes socially significant acts may be accompanied by private kinds of thought which are irrelevant, and which may even hinder than help technological progress. But, on the whole, in spite of these temporary set-backs, mankind has proceeded in an upward grade in so far as technical efficiency is concerned. The author ends the book with a significant and dramatic question, namely, whether these private states of the

mind do really matter or not in so far as the long range view of human evolution is concerned.

The reviewer however subscribes to the view that states of the mind, or thought, do matter to a significant extent in the regulation of the course of cultural change ; and it ought to be one of the purposes of a scientist to find out how far and in what way they have played a part in the regulation of man's social behaviour.

N. K. Bose

Society and Knowledge, by V. G. Childe. Pp. xvii + 131. George Allen & Unwin Ltd. London. 1956. 12s. 6d. net.

The principal thesis of the book is that the function of knowledge is practical ; it is to furnish a guide to action. And every reproduction of the external world, constructed and used as a guide to action by a historical society must in some degree correspond to that reality ; otherwise the society could not have maintained itself. These intellectual tools can again be replaced by more efficient ones, just as stone knives have been replaced by steel ones.

While subscribing to this pragmatic view of truth, the author raises his philosophy to a point to which many in the modern world would love to subscribe. This can be best forth in the author's own language :

'The creative process that I call Reality is completely self-contained and self-sufficient. Outside it there can be nothing. Therefore it is not made of anything, whether matter or spirit, or by anyone, call it God or Absolute. Apart from the process, there are no individuals, no persons. Yet to the process, each individual, though a part, can yet contribute, and thus can actively participate in creation itself. Society is immortal, but its members are born and die. Hence any idea accepted by Society and objectified is likewise immortal. In creating ideas that are thus accepted, any mortal member of Society attains immortality. Personally I desire no more.....

'Society is the repository of all values, the ultimate arbiter of Truth, Goodness and Beauty. These are not eternal values, stored up in remote tranquility. They have demonstrably varied in the course of human history and will no doubt continue to change. For Society is an unrealized ideal. We know in history only societies,

and therefore different standards of Goodness, Truth and Beauty, and these may conflict. We can of course imagine a single Society embracing all men—such an ideal has in fact been entertained in Europe since the Stoics in the days of Alexander the Great. Towards such an imaginary Society, men conceive themselves bound by obligations overriding those of any separatist State or church.

'Such flights of imagination may be just masks for cowardice and laziness. Yet it is through them that fresh moral values have in fact emerged in the course of history, and such trans-valuation of values is the most obviously creative aspect of the process of Reality.....

'Already it is possible to see why the Humanist ideal is not absolute or final. It is possible to imagine a society comprising more than humanity. Indeed scientists have hinted that humanity may owe a duty to non-human nature, and that not only in the generally recognized utilitarian sense of conserving natural resources for more economical human exploitation (pp. 129-131).'

The reader will not fail to see that Professor Gordon Childe thus eventually arrives at a position which has striking similarities with Buddhism, although the differences will not remain unnoticed by those who are familiar with the details of the latter.

N. K. Bose

Asoka's Edicts, by Amulyachandra Sen. Pp. xiv+170. *The Indian Publicity Society, 21 Balaram Ghosh Street, Calcutta 4. 1956. Rupees Fifteen.*

Asoka-Lipi, by Amulyachandra Sen. Pp. 167. *Indian Publicity Society, 21 Balaram Ghosh Street, Calcutta 4. 1953. Rupees Six.*

The author has translated the inscriptions of Asoka in a careful and able manner. He has had the advantage of several distinguished predecessors in the field before him; but the special quality which marks the present edition is not merely its sound scholarship, but a refreshing freedom from bias which has been brought to bear upon the reconstruction of the personality of the great emperor, his religious creed and of his tolerance for sects other than his own. The possible repercussions which Asoka's propagation of the policy of peace had upon contemporary society have been dealt with in a particularly noteworthy manner. The

sources and influences operating upon Asokan art have likewise been treated without a patriotic bias which often mars many a history of Indian art written in recent times.

The Bengali edition of the same book published three years earlier offers nearly the same material, and the presentation is marked by a chaste and lucid literary style. The critical notes are likely to prove useful to students of history and language alike.

N. K. Bose

The Indus People Speak, by Swami Sankarananda. Pp. viii + 112. Nilmony Maharaj, 88 Vivekananda Road, Calcutta 6. 1955. Rupees Ten.

Three post-Christian terracotta seals were discovered in Bihar which bore a number of pictographic symbols, as well as some archaic North Indian writing. Swami Sankarananda has tried to decipher the meaning of the pictographic script with the help of esoteric Tantric dictionaries; and he finds a correspondence between his decipherment and what is written in a well-known script below. There are slight discrepancies, and these are also accounted for. With this measure of success, the author has then proceeded to apply the same method to the decipherment of an amulet recovered from Mohenjodaro, and he has produced an understandable reading. His basic contention is that the Tantric dictionaries record a tradition which goes back to the age of Mohenjodaro and Harappa.

The claims made by the author are brave and revolutionary. The reviewer does not feel competent to assess whether subjective elements have or have not entered in the choice of phonetic values, or of meanings given to the signs on the seals. The observations of the author on Aryan migration, or on the influence of Buddhism on the thought of ancient Greece have, however, appeared to be based upon rather insufficient evidence.

One hopes that competent scholars, versed in the picture-writing of Egypt and of China, which also figure in the author's thesis, will be able to pass a sounder judgement on the claims made by him.

N. K. Bose

The Early Wooden Temples of Chamba, by *Hermann Goetz*. Pp. XIV+121, 12 text illustrations, I-XVI plates and 1 map. *Memoirs of the Kern Institute*, No. 1. E. J. Brill, Leiden. 1955.

Dr. Hermann Goetz has first given a detailed analysis of the political and ethnic history of the Chamba State in order to prepare the background for the description of three ancient wooden temples in that region. These temples, namely, those of Lakshanā Devī in Brahmor, Sakti Devī at Chatrarhi and Markulā Debī at Markulā-Udaipur in Lahul have been described in great detail, while some of the images at Brahmor have also been treated in a similar manner.

Architectural and iconographic details have been utilized for establishing identity of styles and for the reconstruction of the history of art in this area. Dr. Goetz brings in within his sweep features derived not only from the neighbouring regions, but also from distant places like Ajanta or Aihole. There is ample evidence of careful and detailed investigation ; but occasionally the inferences seem to leave one unconvinced.

We only wish there were more detailed descriptive monographs of the same kind from all over India, when it would become more fruitful to go in for wider generalizations.

N. K. Bose

Social Science : AN INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF SOCIETY, by *Elgin F. Hunt, Norman Hill, and Thomas S. Farr*. Pp. xv+741.

This is a simple text-book for social science students enrolled in the first year of college. It aims at introducing the various fields of social science, such as anthropology, sociology, psychology, economics, political science, and international relations with one or two chapters on topics relating to each subject, and with the focus on American society. The text is written particularly for American students. The authors maintain a clear and easy style through all the chapters.

Jyotirmoyee Sarma